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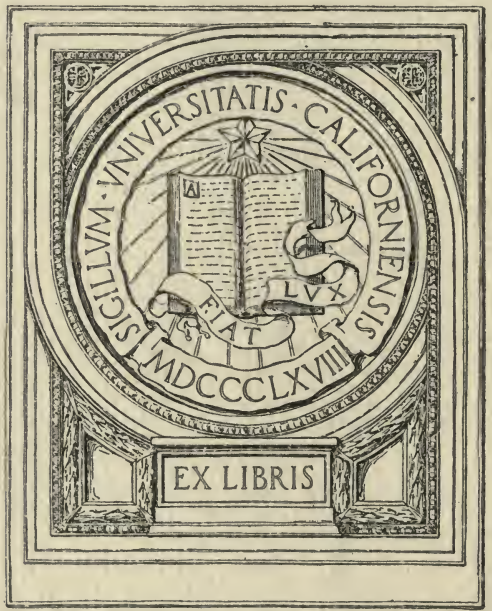

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WHAT IS THE TRUTH ABOUT JESUS CHRIST?

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WHAT IS THE TRUTH ABOUT JESUS CHRIST?

PROBLEMS OF CHRISTOLOGY
DISCUSSED IN
SIX HASKELL LECTURES
AT OBERLIN, OHIO

BY

FRIEDRICH LOOFS, PH.D., TH.D.
Professor of Church History in the University of Halle-Wittenberg, Germany

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PREFACE

THE following lectures are here printed as they were given between the 26th of September and the 4th of October, 1911, at Oberlin, Ohio, under the auspices of the Theological Department of Oberlin College. I have since added only the notes. These notes may excuse the delay of printing. For I was not able to find the time for the work of preparing them before our long autumn vacation.

Originally the lectures were written in German. In translating them, I enjoyed for the second lecture the assistance of my nephew, Mr. Gustav Braunholtz, M.A., of Cambridge, England; and for the five others that of Mr. Siegfried Grosskopf, M.A., of Bloemfontein, South Africa. It is a pleasure for me to thank now in public these friendly helpers.

Thanks are also to be carried by this book to all the Americans whose friendship and hospitality I enjoyed during my sojourn in their country, especially to my dear colleague, the

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professor of church history at Oberlin College, Dr. A. T. Swing, and to Mrs. Swing his wife, whose house was really my home during the ten days I was at Oberlin. I am also indebted to Dr. Swing for his kindly share in reading the proofs of this book.

And if these lectures should come into the hands of one or another of my hearers to whom I had no occasion to speak privately, I hope they may greet them, too, with greetings of that Spirit which is a spirit of unity, uniting not only those whom the sea divides, but also men of different character, different training, and different views about matters of minor importance in the unity of faith.

FRIEDRICH LOOFS.

HALLE A. S.
THE 2D OF MARCH, 1913.

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UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

WHAT IS THE TRUTH ABOUT JESUS CHRIST?

I

JESUS A REAL MAN OF OUR HISTORY

"PROBLEMS of Christology" is the subject of my lectures. A subject somewhat vaguely defined, you may say. Certainly. But a less general formulation capable of giving an idea of what I wish to say could scarcely be found. I shall discuss problems of the life of Jesus, but I shall not confine myself solely to them, nor shall I touch all questions brought before us by the life of Jesus. I shall frequently refer to the history of the ideas about the person of Christ, but I do not intend to make this history as such a subject of my lectures. I do not wish to show how systematic theology has to formulate the Christological problem in its details, and yet I shall discuss many questions outside the scope of historical consideration. This seems to promise a great variety of views. But I hope that my

lectures will nevertheless form a homogeneous whole, for ultimately it is only *one* question which I shall try to answer—the question, What modern Christianity has to think of Jesus; the question, What is the truth about Jesus Christ?

This question has been asked for about nineteen hundred years. All former centuries have been occupied with it. But for every century this question has had a new face. Our young century, too, already has its own token in this respect. When I attempt to show this, I may start, on the one hand, from my native country, Germany; on the other hand, from the country rich in friendly hospitality in which I have the honor now to speak.

It is Germany where research on the life of Jesus originated, and up to the present day it has remained the chief country for these studies. In England, indeed, where we have an older civilization, the age of the so-called enlightenment began earlier than in Germany, and in the Anglican deism the biblical tradition about Jesus was subjected to criticism at an earlier date. Nevertheless it was Germany that first made the attempt to understand the whole life of Jesus

from a purely natural point of view. Hermann Samuel Reimarus († 1768) was so bold as to do this in a fairly long book found among his papers after his death. And it was no other than Lessing who, in 1774–78, brought parts of this work on the literary market as *Fragments from the Wolffenbüttel-Library.*[1] The studies of the next sixty years were more conservative. Then, in 1835, David Friedrich Strauss made a new beginning in the life-of-Jesus-question.[2] And though he found many opponents, and though the majority of the German theologians in the nineteenth century went an essentially other way, nevertheless we see the strong influence of his views in an unbroken chain of learned works in Germany up to the present day. The aim of Reimarus, and later of Strauss, had been to prove the life of Jesus a natural human life and to give the development of the traditions which raised Jesus into the superhuman sphere. This has also been the aim of the most progressive liberal German theology since that time.

[1] Lessing's *Werke*, Berlin, Gustav Hempel, XIV, 79–439.

[2] D. F. Strauss, *Das Leben Jesu, kritisch bearbeitet*, Tübingen, I, 1835, II, 1836.

This aim is not the right one, indeed, as I think; but yet we must concede that an astonishing amount of work and sagacity were employed to fulfil it. And in the courage to defend their convictions, in readiness to make sacrifices for what they considered to be the truth, the supporters of these views often surpassed their opponents. Even in our day not a few German theologians really have this aim; even the last months brought a learned and careful document of this line of thought, intended for widest circulation, viz., an exhaustive article by Professor Heitmüller (Marburg) on Jesus Christ, in the *Handwörterbuch* edited by F. M. Schiele and L. Zscharnack.[1]

Quite a different road has been followed for many years by your countryman, a professor of mathematics, and later of philosophy, in Tulane University at New Orleans, William Benjamin Smith. He has expressed his thoughts most clearly in a new book published in German three months ago. The title of this book, *Ecce*

[1] *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart. Handwörterbuch in gemeinverständlicher Darstellung. Unter Mitwirkung von Hermann Gunkel und Otto Scheel herausgegeben von Friedrich Michael Schiele und Leopold Zscharnack*, Tübingen, III, 343–410.

Deus,[1] is characteristic, for Smith does not intend to sketch a purely human, but a purely divine Jesus. The man Jesus, whose life the biographers of Jesus tried to give, according to Smith did not exist. Smith himself sharply and clearly defines the way he is going. The New Testament, he says,[2] teaches the divinity of Jesus, but also frequently introduces him as a man who was born, grew, hungered, thirsted, was tired like other men, suffered as man and died, was buried, and was raised from the dead. The orthodox doctrine, he says, has accepted this twofold scheme and formed the high mystery of the God-man, which people are called upon to believe. But to our intellect, he thinks, the God-man is a contradiction in itself, an absurdity which a reasonable man cannot accept in peace. Consequently, he thinks only one of two views possible: either Jesus was a man whom posterity only deified, or he was a god erroneously made a man by tradition. In the past, Smith says, the critics unanimously adopted the former view. But all their learning and splendid sagacity was squan-

[1] W. B. Smith, *Ecce Deus. Die urchristliche Lehre des reingöttlichen Jesu*, Jena, 1911.—[2] Comp. pp. 5–8.

dered on an impossible task, for Smith considers as a failure the attempt to understand the rise of Christianity under the supposition that Jesus was a man. He sees the cradle of Christendom in a pre-christian cult of Jesus in the Jewish diaspora and in similar cults of the Roman Empire. Jesus, for him, is originally a god, or rather a name of the one God who was revered in similar cults under other names. When people spoke of his death, they originally meant a dying god, for such myths circulated widely. The story that this God Jesus lived in Judea as man was but the result of giving the subject of the myth a human form. In reality the man Jesus never existed.

If this theory of W. B. Smith were but the fancy of an amateur, as is frequently said, it would not be worth our while to waste any more words about it. But this is not the case. Just as the article of Professor Heitmüller, referred to before, can only be appreciated in connection with the whole history of the life-of-Jesus-problem in Germany, so W. B. Smith, too, must be considered as the representative, probably the most important representative, of a

line of thought surely not singular in modern times.

This is the first point that I have to discuss.

Even as long as a century ago, Smith had a precursor in the French mathematician and astronomer, Charles François Dupuis († 1809), one of the few members of the National Convention who survived the Revolution. This Dupuis derived[1] Christianity, the worship of Jesus and his life-story, from the Oriental solar cult and from myths which the latter produced. And in trying to show Jesus as the double of Mithras, he declared without any restriction that Jesus, the object of the Christian worship, never existed as man. Although this theory of Dupuis was brought before the public as late as 1834 in a new edition of an epitome of his great work,[2] nevertheless it perished like so many other theories, customs, and institutions of the National Convention times. But the recent past revived it, as it did so many other theories of the eighteenth century. As early as 1886 the English writer John M. Robertson

[1] Ch. F. Dupuis, *Origine de tous les cultes*, 3 vols., Paris, 1796.
[2] Ch. F. Dupuis, *Abrégé de l'origine de tous les cultes*, Paris, 1834.

endeavored to explain the stories of Jesus as completely as possible from ancient mythological traditions of various kinds, and, after he had collected, in 1900, his essays in a bulky volume bearing the title *Christianity and Mythology*, occasional notice of his ideas was taken also outside of England. But Robertson did not consider the Jesus of tradition as wholly a fiction of the Gospels, for he held it to be a tenable hypothesis that a certain Jesus was the obscure founder of the cult-community in whose midst the story of Jesus was formed and developed.

Pastor Albert Kalthoff, of Bremen († 1906), on the other hand, who, in 1902, tried to give a solution of the Jesus problem without accepting a historical Jesus,[1] made but a limited use of mythology to explain the Gospel history. But for the Marburg professor of Assyriology, Peter Jensen, who, in 1906, published a book of one thousand pages on the Babylonian Gilgamesch-Epos,[2]

[1] A. Kalthoff, *Das Christus-Problem*, Leipsic, 1902; *Die Entstehung des Christentums. Neue Beiträge zum Christus-Problem*, Leipsic, 1904; *Was wissen wir von Jesus?* Berlin, 1904.

[2] P. Jensen, *Das Gilgamesch-Epos in der Weltlitteratur*, I, Strassburg, 1906.

Jesus is no other than the mythical hero of that epos, his history but an echo of what is told of Gilgamesch. And Arthur Drews, professor of philosophy at Karlsruhe, who in the last two years has caused some excitement in Germany with his book *Die Christusmythe*,[1] here expresses views similar to those of W. B. Smith; moreover, he is directly dependent on a book of W. B. Smith published in Germany in 1906.[2] And besides A. Drews we could mention many others who have supported similar views in a more sporadic form.[3] It is, therefore, not an individual position which W. B. Smith defends; and he defends this position in the most remarkable manner. In Germany, A. Drews has until now been considered the most remarkable supporter of the assertion that Jesus was not a historical but a mythological person; for Jensen, though unquestionably more learned, defends with threadbare arguments an opinion which, aside from its author, has not found a

[1] A. Drews, *Die Christusmythe*, Jena, 1909; 2d edition, 1910.
[2] W. B. Smith, *Der vorchristliche Jesus*, Giessen, 1906.
[3] Comp. C. Clemen, *Religionsgeschichtliche Erklärung des Neuen Testaments*, Giessen, 1909, and the later work of the same author, *Der geschichtliche Jesus*, Giessen, 1911.

scientific sponsor. But I am convinced that, as soon as the new book of Smith becomes more widely known in Germany, Arthur Drews will yield the first place to Smith, as the latter is the wittier of the two and far more at home in theological literature. Moreover, it is a recommendation for his work that he is a man for whom the question of the origin of Christianity has been a real problem for many years, and, as far as we can judge, Smith's aim is not to propagate a sensational theory and acquire personal notoriety, but only to serve the truth. Finally, however strange the position of W. B. Smith may seem, it is nevertheless not unconnected with a broader tendency in modern and scientific thought.

Strange enough, indeed, will his position appear to every Christian. The Gospel story of Jesus was, in his opinion, originally nothing but the announcement of the God Jesus, clothed in the form of parables and symbolical history. When, for instance, we are told that Jesus in a synagogue healed a man with a withered hand,[1] then, according to Smith, the man is

[1] Mark 3: 1 *ff.*

meant to be the Jewish people, who are paralyzed by the letter of the Jewish law and by tradition but will be restored to strength and power by the liberating influence of the Jesus-cult. Only much later, as the parables were not understood, the announcement of Jesus was materialized. Even Saint Paul did not know a man Jesus. The God Jesus who died for all men filled his thoughts. These are certainly strange assertions. They cannot make any impression on a Christian who really knows the Gospels. Nevertheless we must, as I said, remain aware of the fact that these statements are not unconnected with a broader tendency in modern and scientific thought. In the first place, symbolism is beginning to become modern. A person who has not gained an inward relation to the Gospel story will not find Smith's interpretations of the parables and stories of the New Testament essentially different from other symbolistic wisdom. Secondly, the interpretation of the New Testament according to the comparative history of religion, has for some time been the watchword of many scholars. Do they not intend to open a new and promising

way for scientific investigation by this watchword? A few examples[1] will give us the answer.

The Leipsic philosopher, Rudolf Seydel († 1892), tried as early as 1882 to derive many particulars of the evangelical story of Jesus from the Buddha legend.[2] Hermann Gunkel (Giessen), in 1903, contended[3] that the Christology of Saint Paul could only be understood by assuming that a great part of it had its origin in a Messianic theology already known to Paul while still a Pharisee; and Arnold Meyer (Zurich) treated this postulate as a tenable hypothesis.[4] The well-known self-characterization of Jesus, "Son of Man," has been brought into connection with old myths of the original man.[5] The myths of the death and resurrection of a deity have been used by Gunkel[6] and others[7] to explain the primitive Christian ideas about the death and resurrection of Christ. And several

[1] Comp. Clemen, *Religionsgeschichtliche Erklärung*, quoted above, p. 9.—[2] R. Seydel, *Das Evangelium von Jesu in seinen Verhältnissen zu Buddha-Sage und Buddha-Lehre*, Leipsic, 1882. —[3] H. Gunkel, *Zum religionsgeschichtlichen Verständnis des Neuen Testaments*, Göttingen, 1903, p. 89 *ff.*—[4] A. Meyer, *Die Auferstehung Jesu Christi*, Tübingen, 1905, p. 29 *f.*—[5] Comp. C. Clemen, *Religionsgeschichtliche Erklärung*, p. 119 *ff.*—[6] H. Gunkel, *Zum religionsgeschichtlichen Verständnis*, p. 76 *ff.*—[7] Comp. Clemen, p. 146 *ff.*

scholars have pointed out the rôle played by the term "Saviour" or "Redeemer-God" in the syncretistic religious movement of the early Roman Empire, even in the cult of the emperors.[1]

Certainly all these attempts to explain the Christian ideas of Jesus by means of the history of religions do not in the least intend to deny the historicity of Jesus, but are rather meant to support the conviction that the worship of Jesus had its root in the deification of a man. Thus they seem to be in complete opposition to the theory of W. B. Smith. Here again, however, we find the old truth that extremes meet. For if we recognize all assertions made by the many-voiced choir of the leading scholars interested in the history of religions, then we should find parallels for everything in Jesus that goes beyond the ordinary measure of men; and these parallels often are not only regarded as parallels, but appear as factors which produced the Christian opinions about Jesus. It was, there-

[1] A. Harnack, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, 4th edition, Tübingen, 1909–10, I, 136 *ff.*; P. Wendland in the *Zeitschrift für neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 1904, p. 335 *ff.*; comp. H. Lietzmann, *Der Weltheiland. Eine Jenaer Rosenvorlesung mit Anmerkungen*, Bonn, 1909.

fore, not so very far-fetched if people completely denied the existence of the bearer of all these amplifications derived from non-christian religions. The theory of W. B. Smith is the most extreme form and at the same time the caricature of the efforts to explain the Christian appreciation of Jesus on the basis of comparative religion. It is, therefore, not an individual fancy of one or more amateurs, but is undoubtedly connected with a broad tendency of modern scientific thought.

This theory of W. B. Smith, it is true, will not find any more acknowledgment in the scientific world in the future than it has found till now. Nevertheless, the fact of its having been raised is significant for the present situation. At the very moment when the history of religions presumed to explain the godhead of the man Jesus as derived completely from other religions, at this very moment the theory that Jesus was a deified man turned into the opposite one, viz., that the godhead of Jesus was the primary and intelligible factor and his human life nothing but a fiction.

It is the aim of my lectures to show that

neither of the two alternatives formulated by W. B. Smith is tenable: neither the view that Jesus was purely a man whom posterity only elevated beyond the human measure; nor the other, that Jesus-worship was originally worship of a god who only through complete misunderstanding of the oldest symbolical announcement became changed into a man of human history.

The former view still prevails where the traditional Christian ideas are abandoned. It is also much more difficult to show that it is false. Therefore, three of my following lectures will deal with this side of the question. The other side, I hope, will be settled in this lecture.

Of course, all my six lectures would not suffice if I were to deal with all the conjectures made by Smith and Jensen and Drews in support of their position. Ink is cheap, and the suggestive force of a supposed truth has always been exceedingly productive and misleading. But nobody need check a complicated mathematical sum from beginning to end if he finds a flaw in the first proposition. It is, indeed, deserving of praise that some theologians[1] sac-

[1] For instance: H. von Soden, *Hat Jesus gelebt?* Berlin-Schoeneberg, 1910. J. Weiss, *Jesus v. Nazareth—Mythus oder Geschichte?*

rificed their time in order to show by a few examples how untenable are the assertions of Jensen, Smith, and others. But detailed criticism of supposed evidences for an impossible view is neither interesting nor useful. It will suffice if we prove the impossibility of the view itself in a more simple manner.

In doing so I shall refrain from argumentation by means of the Gospels, canonical and apocryphal. Not because the Gospels cannot furnish proof, for every one who reads the Gospels without prejudice will acknowledge that—even if many particulars in the evangelical tradition were fictitious—yet there is in the Gospels a sufficient amount of hard indissoluble rock on which we can base our conviction of Christ's human life. We may refer especially to the local color of Palestine in the Gospels, and also to the close connection between many words of Jesus and the Jewish ideas and customs of the time spoken of in the Gospels. With such arguments, a Swedish rabbi, unquestionably an impartial scholar, Professor Gottlieb Klein, of Stockholm, tried last year with some success to prove the historicity

Tübingen, 1910. H. Weinel, *Ist das "liberale" Jesusbild widerlegt*, Tübingen, 1910. C. Clemen, *Der geschichtliche Jesus*, Giessen, 1911.

of Jesus.[1] But against W. B. Smith we cannot quote the Gospels if we do not disprove his interpretation of them in detail, and that would require much time and afford little pleasure. I shall have occasion to speak about the Gospels in another lecture. To-day I pass them by.

Then the question rises whether there are any other sources for the life of Jesus which could disprove the view of W. B. Smith.

Smith tries to show that there are no non-christian sources that refute his theory. I could grant this to some extent, but in order to make the whole question intelligible, I shall enter into a discussion as to the real or supposed non-christian references to Jesus. The strange theory of Smith may become psychologically more intelligible if I begin with evidences once highly esteemed but now discredited by all conscientious scholars.

The oldest non-christian evidence was once considered to be two texts preserved by Eusebius, Bishop of Cæsarea, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, brought to a close in 325.[2] Eusebius had found

[1] G. Klein, *Ist Jesus eine historische Persönlichkeit?* Tübingen, 1910.—[2] Eusebius, *H. E.*, I, 13, 6 *ff.*

them, as he tells us, in a Syriac manuscript which was deposited in the public archives of Edessa. He quotes them in Greek translation. They contain a letter of the king, Abgar Ukkâmâ, of Edessa, to Jesus and a short answer of the latter. Both letters pretend to date from the time of the public activity of Jesus. Abgar, who has heard of the miracles of Jesus, asks him to take the trouble to come to him and heal the disease he has. Jesus does not accede to his request because, as he writes, it is necessary for him to fulfil all things there for which he had been sent. But he promises the king to send, after having been taken up to his Father, one of his disciples. A narrative passage following the letters in the manuscript of the Edessa archives, and also quoted by Eusebius, reports that, according to this promise of Jesus, after his ascension, in the twenty-ninth year of our era, Thaddæus, one of the seventy disciples, mentioned by Saint Luke, was sent to Edessa, where he healed the king and preached the gospel successfully to him and his people.

It cannot be doubted that Eusebius really made use of a manuscript of the Edessa ar-

chives, and it is certain that there was a king Abgar Ukkâmâ in Edessa at the time of Jesus (9–46 A. D.). Moreover, the genuineness of this correspondence between King Abgar and Jesus has been defended recently by a German Catholic scholar.[1] Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that the correspondence is a forgery. For, although Christianity came to the empire of Edessa at a very early date[2]—as early as 190 we find Christian communities there—still it is certain that the first of the royal house to become a Christian was Abgar IX in the beginning of the third century. The alleged correspondence between Abgar V and Jesus could only belong to the time after this first Christian king. Hence this correspondence cannot prove the historicity of Jesus.

Another letter pretends to have been written shortly after the death of Jesus. It is a letter of Pilate to the Roman Emperor, preserved in

[1] J. Nirschl, *Der Briefwechsel des König Abgar von Edessa mit Jesus, oder die Abgarfrage* (*Der Katholik, Zeitschrift für Katholische Wissenschaft und kirchliches Leben*, ed. J. M. Raich, Mainz, 1896, II, 17 *ff.*, 97 *ff.*, etc.).

[2] Eusebius, *H. E.*, 5, 23, 4; comp. F. C. Burkitt, *Early Christianity outside the Roman Empire*, Cambridge, 1894, and *Early Eastern Christianity*, London, 1904, first lecture.

some apocrypha of the fourth century.[1] The letter speaks in general of the miracles of Jesus, states that Jesus had been handed over to him, Pilate, by the Jews, and again by him, after having been scourged, to the Jews. The latter then crucified him, but Jesus rose from the dead in spite of the guards at the grave. Now, scholars do not agree as to the date of the origin of this letter. As early as the end of the second century, in the writings of the African Christian Tertullian we find the opinion that Pilate reported favorably on Jesus to his imperial master,[2] and in 150 the Christian apologist Justin Martyr takes it for granted that minutes were taken down under Pilate, by which the evangelical narrations about Jesus were confirmed.[3] It is, therefore, not impossible that a story, a part of which was the letter of Pilate referred to, or a similar one, circulated as early as the second century. But we cannot prove

[1] *Evang. Nicod.*, Rec. A, cap. 13, ed. C. v. Tischendorf, *Evangelia apocrypha*, ed. sec., Leipsic, 1876, p. 413; *Acta Petri et Pauli*, cap. 40 *ff.*, ed. C. v. Tischendorf, *Acta apostol. apocrypha*, Leipsic, 1851, p. 16 *f.*; comp. A. Harnack, *Die Chronologie der altchristl. Litteratur*, I, Leipsic, 1897, p. 605 *ff.*

[2] Tertullian, apol. c. 21, ed. Oehler, ed. min., p. 103.

[3] Justin, apol. I, 35 and 48, ed. Otto, I, 106 C and 132 C.

this satisfactorily. So much, however, is certain—that this letter of Pilate is not genuine. An official report of the procurator would show quite a different face.

Forty years later than the letter of Pilate, if genuine, would be, according to the opinion of some scholars, a letter of a certain Mara, son of Serapion, to Serapion his son, published in 1855 from a Syriac manuscript of the British Museum.[1] It is a letter of advice from an earnest father to his youthful son, and makes no direct mention of the name of Christ. But in connection with a commemoration of Socrates and Pythagoras the letter alludes to the *wise king of the Jews* and considers the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews as an act of divine vengeance for their having murdered him. *Socrates,* so the letter states, *is not dead, because of Plato* (who kept his memory alive), *nor is the wise king because of the laws which he promulgated.*

If this letter, written as it seems by a heathen, really dates from the year 73, as, for instance, the

[1] W. Cureton, *Spicilegium Syriacum,* London, 1855, pp. 43–48 and 70–76.

late Professor Zöckler of Greifswald assumed,[1] then this letter would perhaps be a pagan witness for Jesus, independent of the Christian tradition. But the first editor, the learned Cureton, gave the letter a later date. He did not deny that it was possibly written about the year 95 A. D., but for himself he considered it more correct to assign its date to the latter half of the second century. Even in the former case the knowledge of Jesus shown by the writer probably originated in Christian tradition. In the second case, which has many arguments in its favor,[2] this conclusion is unavoidable. Consequently, the letter of Mara can probably not figure as a pagan witness for Jesus. It is, therefore, no conclusive evidence of the historicity of Jesus.

The uncertainty as to the date, which lessens the value of the Mara letter, fortunately does not exist in the case of the writer of whom I am to speak now, viz., Josephus, the Jewish historian. For his *Antiquitates Judaicæ* (*Jewish*

[1] *Real-Encyklopädie für prot. Theol. und Kirche*, 3. Aufl., ed. A. Hauck, IX, 3, Leipsic, 1901.

[2] Comp. A. Harnack, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Litteratur bis Eusebius*, I, Leipsic, 1893, p. 763.

Antiquities), which come into consideration, a Jewish history from the first man to the twelfth year of Nero, that is, 66 A. D., can be accurately dated. According to Josephus's own statement they were finished at Rome in the winter 93–94. And certainly it is highly probable that Josephus's writings were not influenced by Christian tradition. Therefore, assertions of Josephus about Jesus would have great weight. But nevertheless we have no definite non-christian reference to Jesus in Josephus. Twice in our texts of the *Antiquitates* Jesus is mentioned. The first passage is: *At that time lived Jesus, a wise man, if indeed it be proper to call him a man. For he was a doer of wonderful works, and a teacher of such men as receive the truth in gladness. And he attached to himself many of the Jews, and many also of the Greeks. He was the Christ. When Pilate, on the accusation of our principal men, condemned him to the cross, those who had loved him in the beginning did not cease loving him. For he appeared unto them again alive on the third day, the divine prophets having told these and countless other wonderful things concerning him. Moreover, the race of Christians, named after*

him, continues down to the present day.[1] The second passage relates that the high priest Ananus made use of the interval between the death of the procurator Festus and the accession to office of his successor, Albinus (that is, probably about the beginning of 62 A. D.) for high-handed action: *He called together*, so Josephus narrates, *the Sanhedrim, and brought before them the brother of Jesus, the so-called Christ, James by name, together with some others, and accused them of violating the law and condemned them to be stoned.*[2]

The former famous passage is, up to the present time, considered by almost all Roman Catholic theologians as being genuine. But that means defending a lost position. A person who writes as the Josephus-text now reads confesses himself a Christian. But Josephus was no Christian. The fact that Eusebius, the church historian referred to before, as early as about 325 A. D., had the same text, as his quotations prove,[3] and that all manuscripts of Josephus, that are considerably later than Eusebius's time, have the present

[1] *Antiquit.*, XVIII, 3, 3.—[2] *Antiquit.*, XX, 9, 1.—[3] *H. E.*, 1, 11, 7; Demonst. ev., 3, 3, 105.

text, only proves that this text of ours is older than Eusebius, but not that Josephus himself wrote the passage in question. The present text of the Josephus passage is interpolated or spurious. Opinions differ as to which of these two alternatives is the more probable,[1] and a convincing decision is to my mind impossible. Two arguments may be brought forward to prove that something of our present text was written by Josephus himself, that, therefore, the passage is only interpolated, *i. e.*, enlarged by spurious additions. In the first place, we may point out that by expunging a few phrases a text may be reconstructed which might have been written by Josephus. A second argument may be derived from the second passage quoted, which reports that, besides the others who were condemned by Ananus, also James, *the brother of Jesus, the so-called Christ*, was executed. For if this second passage is genuine (and even the most recent editor of Josephus, the late historian of our University of Halle, Benedictus Niese, considered it genuine), Josephus must have

[1] Comp. E. Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi*, I, 3d and 4th editions, Leipsic, 1901, pp. 545–549.

spoken before of "Jesus, the so-called Christ," because here he is introduced as a well-known personage. But, to say nothing about the first argument, the second, too, is unconvincing, because it is not certain that the second passage belongs to Josephus as it now reads. The mention of James may be a spurious addition. For, in any case, the former passage proves that Christian hands were at work in revising our Josephus-text. Therefore, with regard to the importance of Josephus in the question of the life of Jesus, only two things are certain. First, that if Josephus wrote anything about Jesus, we cannot know what he wrote; for if we must assume a Christian interpolator in the former famous passage, we cannot expunge what he added; and, on the other hand, could he not also have omitted something which he found in the text? Secondly, it is certain that we do not know whether Josephus said anything at all about Jesus, for the mention of James may be an interpolation and the whole passage about Jesus a Christian addition. The context of Josephus is not broken by striking out these passages. Another Jewish historian of this time, Justus of

Tiberias, whose works are lost, likewise remained wholly silent about Jesus, as a learned father of the church relates.[1]

According to Jewish tradition, on the other hand, a younger contemporary of Josephus, the Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrkanos, told how he met a disciple *of Jesus the Nazarene*.[2] Moreover, the learned Swedish rabbi, Gottlieb Klein,[3] already referred to, professes to have proved, in a book published two years ago, that Eliezer was also well acquainted with the doctrine of Jesus, and that he, like the older Rabbi Samuel the Lesser, took an interest in his tragic fate. But I do not consider these assertions as proved. And the report of Eliezer that he met the Jewish Christian, James of Kephar Sekhanja, cannot be regarded as authentic word for word, as it was only written down in later times following tradition. But here everything depends on the very words which call James of Kephar Sekhanja *one of the disciples of Jesus the Nazarene*. This

[1] Photius, *Biblioth.*, cod. 33. Migne, *Ser. græca*, 103, col. 65.

[2] *Handbuch zu dem neutestamentlichen Apokryphen*, ed. E. Hennecke, Tübingen, 1904, p. 68.

[3] G. Klein, *Der älteste christliche Katechismus und die jüdische Propaganda-Litteratur*, Berlin, 1909, p. 113 *ff.*; comp. G. Klein, *Ist Jesus eine historische Persönlichkeit?* Tübingen, 1910, p. 45.

evidence, too, therefore, remains uncertain and is not convincing.

We are on firmer ground when we come to the Roman historian Tacitus. Smith, it is true, tries to show that the passage now in question is also an interpolation.[1] But here the wish was father to the thought. Smith himself evidently does not regard his arguments as conclusive, for he thinks that he can get rid of the passage even if it were genuine. It is a passage in the *Annales* of Tacitus (completed about 116 A. D.).[2] Here Tacitus, when writing about the Neronian persecution of "Christians," takes occasion to add a short notice about Christ. *The author of this name, Christ,* he says, *was put to death during the reign of Tiberius by order of the governor Pontius Pilatus. Thus repressed for the moment, the disastrous superstition afterward broke out afresh, not only in Judea, where the evil originated, but also at Rome, where all atrocious and scandalous things from every quarter flow together and become celebrated.* Karl Weizsäcker, the well-known German theologian († 1899), began his history of the Apostolic Age with this quotation, to my

[1] W. B. Smith, *Ecce Deus*, p. 234 *ff.*—[2] XV, 44.

mind not very tactfully. He evidently took it for granted that Tacitus there gives us information, independent of Christian tradition, but derived from an older source or from careful inquiry. This opinion is shared by many scholars even at the present day, and there is much to be said in its favor. For Tacitus is accustomed to mark particulars which he knows only from hearsay, and here we do not find such a mark. But this position cannot be definitely proved. It may be possible, I grant, that the notice of Tacitus in its first part is merely an echo of gossip originally Christian, and in its second part a mixture of conjecture and observation by Tacitus himself. The mention of Christ by Pliny the Younger, a contemporary of Tacitus, is undoubtedly dependent on Christian narratives, and the same is true of everything that later pagan authors tell about Jesus, including a notice of Suetonius (about 120 A. D.), the phrasing of which leaves it entirely doubtful whether it refers to Christ at all. In the same manner the Jewish blasphemies against Christ, which we first find in Celsus, the pagan controversialist, about 180 A. D., are a caricature of the Christian preaching.

I am, therefore, at the end of my discussion of the non-christian sources. Do they suffice to refute the statements of Smith, Jensen, and Drews? Do they give evidence of the human life of Jesus? I answer, they make it very difficult to hold the view that the human life of Jesus is only a fiction, but we can hardly say that they refute it convincingly.

I said, they make the statements of Smith and his group very difficult. I am prepared to drop Josephus. It may be, as we saw, that he said nothing about Jesus. But one fact must be emphasized: that, if Josephus kept silent about Jesus, his silence is not in favor of Smith and those who agree with him. For it can be satisfactorily explained by the circumstance that Josephus, having become a friend of the Romans, considered it advisable completely to ignore the Messianic hope of his nation, as being suspicious from the political point of view. But Tacitus throws difficulties in the way of Smith, for it is not likely that this conscientious historian would tell what he knew only from hearsay without mentioning this source. Still greater are the difficulties arising from the Jewish tradition.

I pass by the notice about Rabbi Eliezer mentioned above; but it is an important fact that in Jewish tradition we do not meet with the least doubt about the human life of Jesus. The Jewish theologians of the first and second centuries, whose doctrines and narrations are handed down by the Jewish tradition, were connected by tradition with the time when Pilate was procurator in Judea, and the preaching about Jesus certainly scandalized them from the very beginning. If they had been in a position to extirpate this preaching by showing that the whole story of a Jesus who lived and died under Pilate was only a fiction, they would undoubtedly have done so. And if this had been the case, then the Jewish tradition would certainly have preserved some notice of this fact. This is an *argumentum e silentio*, indeed, but a very weighty one. I concede, however, that the historicity of Christ cannot be conclusively proved by the non-christian sources. Those who prefer to doubt this cannot be refuted convincingly by the non-christian sources, either by their silence or by their speaking.

But they can be refuted by the Christian

sources apart from the Gospels. This I wish to show at the end of this lecture. I refrain from using Acts, as it is closely connected with the three synoptic Gospels; from the epistles of James, Jude, and John, because they do not bring any convincing arguments; from Revelation, because its figurative language is not suited for argumentation; from the second epistle of Peter, because, in agreement with other critics, I do not consider it genuine; and from the first Petrine epistle, because there are weighty reasons against assigning it to Peter. Thus, I confine myself to the letters of Saint Paul. And even of these I shall make use of only a few. But I shall try to give the little I have to say in such a manner that even laymen can gain an idea of the amount of certainty which science in this respect may claim.

It is well known that none of the New Testament books have come down to us in the original of the author. They share this fate with all books of antiquity. Copies only are preserved, which are separated from the originals by a countless number of older copies. This is quite natural. For lasting manuscripts, written on

parchment, came into use only in the fourth century. Before this time people wrote on papyrus, and this material is very fragile. We need, therefore, not marvel that we possess only very few shreds of papyrus with copies of New Testament writings.[1] Our oldest parchment manuscripts of the whole New Testament date from about 400. We are, however, carried much farther back by the oldest translations, which are naturally likewise preserved only in manuscripts, and by the more or less copious quotations in the oldest church writers. In this manner the New Testament, as a whole, may be traced back as far as about 180 A. D., if we ignore unimportant variations in its contents. Farther back we can trace only the single groups, the Gospels, the epistles of Paul, etc., and ultimately only the single writings.

In this respect we are in an especially lucky position as regards the first epistle of Saint Paul to the Corinthians. For while the oldest post-biblical writers mostly weave passages from the New Testament into their works without giving

[1] Comp. C. R. Gregory, *Textkritik des Neuen Testaments*, Leipsic, 1909, p. 1084.

the origin, this letter of Paul's is found expressly cited at a very early date, and actually in a letter of the Roman community to that of Corinth, written very probably in the year 95.[1] This letter in its turn is used as early as about 110 in a letter of Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, and this letter of Polycarp's, again, is known about 185 to Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, a native of Asia Minor, who had personal connections with Polycarp. Irenæus, in his turn, with his most famous book, is made use of by Tertullian about 200 A. D., etc., etc. Thus, an unbroken chain leads us to the time of the oldest manuscripts. Moreover, we learn from a letter of Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, about 180, that the letter of the Roman community, referred to above, had been regularly read in Corinth during the service from olden times.[2] In short, the external evidence in the case of I Corinthians is convincing to a degree that is rarely found in antiquity. Add to this, that I Corinthians reveals its personal and historical individuality in such a marked

[1] I Clm. 47: "Take up the epistle of the blessed Paul the apostle. What wrote he first unto you in the beginning of the gospel?" Ed. J. B. Lightfoot, II, London, 1890, pp. 143 and 296.

[2] Eusebius, *H. E.*, 4, 23, 11.

manner that the internal evidence, too, would be conclusive for its genuineness.

But if I Corinthians is undoubtedly genuine, then, even excluding external evidence, which, by the way, is not wanting, the same is surely the case with II Corinthians, Romans, Galatians, and Philippians. We cannot but recognize the same author and similar historical circumstances. The other Pauline letters, excepting the pastoral epistles, I also recognize as being genuine, but I make no use of them here. Romans, too, I shall leave aside, because Smith[1] asserts, though with unsatisfactory arguments, that it is not a Pauline letter but a later treatise which employs old material and together with it was dressed up as a Pauline letter to the Romans. In reality, Smith is probably brought to this assertion because Romans 1:3 is fatal to his theory, as it says of Christ: *He was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.* Even apart from Romans, Smith's view suffers shipwreck on the rock of I Corinthians and Galatians. Also, from Galatians, it is clear that Saint Paul knows

[1] *Der vorhistorische Jesus*, Giessen, 1906, pp. 136–224; *Ecce Deus*, p. 165.

that Christ was *the seed of Abraham* (3 : 16), that *he was made of a woman and made under the law* (4:4). In I Corinthians he relates that Christ *in the same night in which he was betrayed,* instituted the Lord's Supper (11:23 *ff.*); he reminds the Corinthians of that *which he delivered unto them, that Christ died for our sins and that he was buried and that he rose again* (15:3 *f.*). And incidentally in I Corinthians (9:5) he shows that he knows brothers of Jesus who travelled about with their wives; and in Galatians (1 : 19) he tells us that three years after his conversion he saw Peter and *James, the Lord's brother,* in Jerusalem. Smith makes short work of these passages. He calls most of them later interpolations, and the brothers of the Lord, for him, are nothing else than a class of believers in the Messiah who occupied almost the same position as the apostles and were distinguished by the honorable name "Brothers of the Lord" or "Brothers of Jesus." A specialist for nervous diseases, in no wise prejudiced, whom I told about these shallow arguments of Smith, was of opinion that such argumentation could only be understood from a psychopathic point of view. I de-

fended Smith against this accusation, for church history gives us hundreds of examples of sound-headed men who, when wishing to defend a favorite hypothesis which they believe in danger, do not behave otherwise than a drowning man catching at a straw. But so much is certain: such fancies need not be discussed. The text of Josephus could easily have been interpolated in the two hundred years between its origin and Eusebius's time; but in the case of the Pauline epistles, especially I Corinthians, whose use we can trace nearly from the time when it was written till the time to which textual criticism leads us, such a statement is folly, is scientific bad-behavior. And to change the brothers of Jesus into "Brethren in the Lord" is but a confession of hopeless perplexity. For the existence of these brothers of Jesus suffices to wreck the fantastic edifice of W. B. Smith in spite of all his learning. Even apart from these Pauline passages we have sufficient evidence for the existence of brothers of Jesus. The Gospels know them.[1] Hegesippus, about 180, acquainted with Jewish-

[1] Matt. 12:46; 13:55; Mark 3:32; 6:3; Luke 8:19; John 7:3, 5.

Christian traditions, was interested in their descendants and relatives, *in the family of the Lord*, as he says.[1] Even as late as about 230 *the relatives of our Lord according to the flesh, the so-called Desposynoi, i. e.*, who belonged to the Master, were well known to Julius Africanus.[2] These "brothers of the Lord" were changed to "cousins" as late as the fourth century, by the development of the veneration for the Virgin Mary. Circumspect scholars, therefore, do not need the testimony of Saint Paul in order to be convinced that Jesus had brothers, and, therefore, lived as a man in this world of ours. Yet it is fortunate that the personal acquaintance of Paul with *James, the brother of the Lord*, does not leave any doubt on this point.

And it is not only the fact that Jesus lived a human life which is confirmed by Saint Paul, who a few years after the death of Jesus changed from a persecutor to a believer. For Ernest Renan, the well-known author of a life of Jesus which surely does not show belief in Christ, has very correctly said that we can give a brief sketch of the life of Jesus by the help alone of

[1] Eusebius, *H. E.*, 3, 20.—[2] Eusebius, *H. E.*, 1, 7, espec. 1, 7, 14.

the materials found in the Pauline letters to the Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians.[1]

Hence, the statement that Jesus was only a deity, falsely changed into a man by tradition, is simply disproved by what we know for certain about Jesus from Saint Paul.

It is another question whether Smith is right in rejecting the opposite statement that Jesus was only a man whom later times erroneously elevated beyond human measure. This question will occupy us in the three following lectures.

[1] E. Renan, *Histoire du peuple d'Israel*, V, Paris, 1893, p. 416, not. 1: Paul croyait certainement, que Jésus avait existé. On pourrait faire une petite "vie de Jésus" avec les épîtres aux Romains, aux Corinthiens, aux Galates et avec l'épître aux Hébreux, qui n'est pas de saint Paul, mais est bien ancienne.

II

THE LIBERAL JESUS-PICTURE

IN my first lecture I started with showing the contrast between the liberal German research on the life of Jesus and the theory of your countryman, William Benjamin Smith. Smith himself, as we saw, formulated the contrast in the following manner: the liberal German theology tries to understand the life of Jesus as a purely human life; he himself, on the contrary, is convinced that Jesus was originally a purely divine being and that the stories of his human life were merely later fictions. Only by this assumption does the rise of Christianity appear to him to be comprehensible. We saw that this theory of Smith's proved to be untenable even if we do not examine it in detail. Now the question rises whether his judgment about the purely human conception of Jesus is more tenable.

It is not Smith alone who asserts that the

German liberal Jesus-research—for brevity's sake I shall henceforth use this expression instead of research on the life of Jesus—cannot hold its position. Nor is it only the older school which shares in this criticism.

Five years ago there appeared in Germany a singular, one-sided, but learned and eminently ingenious history of the German Jesus-research, a work which Dr. Sanday, of Oxford, told me he considers one of the most interesting and important German books he knows.[1] The author is a young German theologian, Albert Schweitzer (born 1875), lecturer at the University of Strassburg, and the title of the work is *From Reimarus to Wrede, a History of the Research on the Life of Jesus*.[2] W. B. Smith could not have been acquainted with this work, when in 1906 he published his book on the *Pre-christian Jesus*, and in his new book, *Ecce Deus*, he also shows no knowledge of it. At any rate, Smith's judgment about the German Jesus-research is independent of Schweitzer, and the conceptions of Jesus by Smith and Schweitzer differ as widely

[1] Comp. W. Sanday, *The Life of Jesus in Recent Research*, Oxford, 1907, p. 44 *f*.—[2] Tübingen, 1906.

as possible. For it does not occur to Schweitzer to deny, as Smith does, the historicity of Jesus. Jesus, according to Schweitzer, was a man who played his part in history, a man who was filled with erroneous thoughts of Messianic hope and who was shipwrecked together with his hopes. Schweitzer, therefore, is one of the extremest supporters of those liberal views against which W. B. Smith polemizes with great vivacity. And yet the assertions of Schweitzer and Smith have many points in common. What I said above in the last lecture, about Smith and Arthur Drews on the one side, and the school of comparative religious history on the other, holds good here, too: extremes meet. And here, too, this meeting of extremes is very significant for the present situation of the Jesus-research.

Smith is of the opinion that the efforts of liberal German theology to describe a purely human life of Jesus have been futile. He says that, in spite of all deeply grounded knowledge and talented constructions, none of these efforts have been crowned with success. None of them lasted longer than a very short time, and that, too, only in a very small circle. The picture of Jesus

which has been painted by liberal German theology, the "liberal Jesus-picture," so to speak, is for him only a chimera, a creation of fancy, in reality unimaginable, and completely lacking in historical value and justification. The ingenious biographers of Jesus, he says, have stared into the crystal sea of the Gospels and every one of them has seen his own face mirrored in these calm depths. Similar words are used by Schweitzer. The last chapter of his book, where he deals with the results of the Jesus-research, opens with the following passage: *Those who like to speak of a negative theology have no great difficulty here. There is nothing more negative than the result of the Jesus-research. Such a Jesus as is painted by this research, a Jesus who appeared as the Messiah, preached the morality of the Kingdom of God, and died in order to sanction his work, never existed. His figure is a fanciful picture sketched by Rationalism, revivified by Liberalism, wrongfully represented by modern theology as the result of historical science. This figure has not been destroyed from without, but has collapsed, being shattered and torn asunder by the real historical problems which arose one after the other.*

Schweitzer, as well as Smith, brands the biographers of Jesus as false psychologists, and, like Smith, accuses them of having been guided in painting their pictures of Jesus more by their own personal ideals than by history.

Now, the question is, whether Smith and Schweitzer are right in that which they have in common. Can we agree with their judgment about the liberal Jesus-research of our day, which looks on Jesus as a purely human being? Has this research work, extending over so many years, this work for which both Schweitzer and Smith have words of the highest, almost dithyrambic, praise, really led to no tenable results?

With this question we shall occupy ourselves in this and the next two lectures.

Our first task will be—and that is the subject of my lecture to-day—to gain a survey over the German Jesus-research. This survey must be such as to make the judgments of Smith and Schweitzer intelligible. We can and must pass over in silence those scholars who, as, *e. g.*, Neander[1] and Tholuck[2] seventy years ago, and at the

[1] A. W. Neander, *Das Leben Jesu Christi*, Hamburg, 1837.

[2] A. Tholuck, *Die Glaubwürdigkeit der evangelischen Geschichte*, Hamburg, 1837.

present day Bernhard Weiss,[1] in Berlin, and others, see not merely a man in Jesus. Nor is it my duty to give all details of that line of the development of the Jesus-research with which we have to deal, that is to say, that which regards Jesus as a purely human being. That would only confuse and weary you with a host of names. My aim must be to emphasize the principal phases of the development and to make intelligible the genesis of the liberal Jesus-picture, opposed so energetically by Smith and Schweitzer, and to characterize the present situation of the liberal Jesus-research.

The liberal German Jesus-research begins under English deistic influence in a very radical manner with Hermann Samuel Reimarus († 1768), the author of the so-called Wolffenbüttel-Fragments, edited, as we saw,[2] by Lessing. To Reimarus Jesus appeared wholly a man, who belonged completely to the Jewish people. Jesus considered himself the Messiah in the sense of the politically colored Messianic hopes of his time. He foretold the close ap-

[1] B. Weiss, *Das Leben Jesu*, 2 vols., 1st edition, Berlin, 1882.
[2] Above, p. 3.

proach of the Messianic kingdom and wished to prepare his countrymen for this approach by his moral teaching. He did not destroy the Jewish law nor did he propose new articles of faith or institute new ceremonies. For baptism, as long as Jesus lived, was nothing but a preparation for the Messianic kingdom already practised by John the Baptist; and the Last Supper of Jesus with his disciples was only an anticipation of the Passover, which was to be celebrated on the following day. Jesus was a Jewish Messiah, nothing more. As such he entered Jerusalem, as such he cleansed the temple and harangued against the Scribes and the Pharisees. But his Messianic hopes were buried by his capture and crucifixion. His aims, namely, to found a worldly Messianic kingdom and to deliver the Jews from their unhappy political situation, proved abortive. His last words: *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!* gave evidence of his being aware of this failure. But the disciples stole his corpse and within a few days they created their new system, which did not harmonize with the original system of Jesus once shared by them, but

the system of a Saviour who died for the sins of mankind and rose from the dead. According to this system they disposed and fabricated the history now found in the Gospels. But a keen-sighted eye, in the opinion of Reimarus, can recognize in the Gospels the lines of the first system under the colors laid on by the second.

The inconsiderate radicalism of these thoughts has always been applauded by similarly inclined men. Schweitzer praises Reimarus above all for having done justice to the Messianic eschatological element, though he considers him mistaken in his political conception of it. Nevertheless, all scholars since Reimarus are unanimous in thinking that Reimarus in his attempt to understand the life of Jesus as a merely human one has chosen an impossible way. For the deception practised, according to Reimarus, by the disciples, and the complete opposition between their thoughts and those of Jesus—between their second system, as Reimarus says, and the first—make the beginnings of Christianity an insolvable riddle.

Indeed, the influence of Reimarus was at first very small. Of course, the theologians of

the rationalistic period, whose picture of Christ is the second type to be mentioned, agreed with Reimarus in the purely human conception of Jesus. But they thought they could do without the ugly judgments about the Gospels and about the first disciples, which gave the conception of Reimarus such an offending and odious character. What the Gospels relate is, as far as the external facts are concerned, essentially historical for the rationalistic theologians. But the evangelists, and before them already the first disciples, did not see how the facts were produced in a natural manner. The stories that Jesus raised some persons from the dead must be interpreted as referring originally but to a wakening from a condition of trance. And in the same manner Jesus, too, is to be regarded as not having really died on the cross. After having recovered his strength in the grave, he had intercourse with his disciples for forty days at such intervals as his weak state of health allowed. Then he died; where and how, the disciples did not know. Hence the stories of the appearances of the crucified Christ are throughout historical. The last parting of Jesus was

naturally interpreted by the disciples as his ascension. But miracles did not take place either here or elsewhere in the life of Jesus. The miracle was he himself, his character, pure, sunny, and holy, and yet genuinely human and capable of imitation by men. The eschatological sayings of Jesus were rendered appreciable to enlightened thought, partly by means of an attenuating interpretation, partly by the hypothesis that Jesus accommodated himself to the ideas of the people.

This conception of the life of Jesus continued to live among the clergy in a few cases as far as into the second half of the nineteenth century, and had for a long time its friends among the more enlightened middle classes. For theological science and the well-instructed laymen it was made impossible as early as seven years after the appearance of the standard work of this type, the *Life of Jesus*, published, in 1828, by Heinrich Eberhard Gottlob Paulus, professor at Heidelberg. It was David Friedrich Strauss who, in his famous *Life of Jesus* of 1835, criticised these rationalistic constructions in the keenest and most convincing manner. It was not difficult

to show that here the Gospels were not done justice to, and that the events which, according to the rationalistic interpretation, lay at the bottom of the evangelical stories were not capable of explaining that which actually is narrated. This, too, was evident—that the character of Jesus as conceived by the rationalists was not such as to allow his disciples to believe in miracles where none had occurred. And it was not by his criticism alone that David Friedrich Strauss marked a new stage in the Jesus-research. It was chiefly his criticism of the narrations themselves that was epoch-making, and that criticism formed the main contents of his book. Apart from the introduction and extensive closing remarks, the two volumes consist merely of loosely connected chapters which, bit by bit, try to prove the evangelical history to be unhistorical. Strauss attempted to gain this result by means of mythical interpretation. Myths are something other than fabulous traditions. All historical tradition, the farther it reaches, is more and more contaminated by unhistorical traits, exaggerations, and amplifications; but the essential core is a real historical fact. The myth, too, may

start from a historical event or a historical person, but its real subject is never a historical fact but an idea; the myth is a thought clothed in the garb of history. Such myths are found by Strauss in the New Testament. He does not deny that these myths had one starting-point in the grandeur of Jesus' character. But a second is to be found in the ideas of a Messiah which existed among the Jews before Jesus. And this second starting-point is for Strauss the more important. For, whereas the first is, according to Strauss, a little-known and, therefore, constant factor, it is the second which brings variety into his deductions. What was expected of the Messiah was told of Jesus. That is the song which is sung by Strauss with continual variations. The New Testament stories are fictions which express the idea that Jesus was the Messiah. The historical residuum which is left by this interpretation is very small. Strauss nowhere collects it; we must gather it from occasional notices. Jesus grew up at Nazareth, was baptized by John, considered himself the Messiah, wandered about Palestine with disciples, contended with the Pharisees, and succumbed to the enmity of

the latter. There is also, according to Strauss, much spurious matter in the words of Jesus, transmitted to us by the Gospels. Yet he acknowledges some authentic material in the great groups of sayings in Saint Matthew, especially in the sermon on the mount. But he makes little positive use of these sayings. His deductions exhaust themselves, for the most part, in the examination of the reliability of the material handed down to us. Here, too, he remains essentially the critic.

Nevertheless Strauss's *Life of Jesus* marks a real progress which must be admitted even by those scholars who do not share his views. By his efforts the unhistorical interpretations of the rationalists were swept away. And an earnest attempt was made to understand the genesis of the New Testament stories without the odious incredibilities into which Reimarus had been led. This attempt also failed, as is generally conceded by later scholars. The evangelical history in its entirety cannot be understood as a garland of myths produced only by the Messianic belief. Strauss did not occupy himself with literary criticism sufficiently to enable him

to see that the narratives of the Gospels were too dissimilar to be treated alike. Lastly, liberal theology, too, has acknowledged that that which the Gospels narrate is historical to a greater extent than Strauss had assumed. Nevertheless Strauss, as Schweitzer[1] justly remarks, was not only the destroyer of former solutions of the Jesus-problem, but was also the prophet of a new science, the science of modern Jesus-research. Strauss himself had a presentiment of this fact. When a friend asked him to sketch a definite picture of Jesus and to show what historical remains were left after his criticism, he granted the justice of this request, but declared at the same time that he for himself could not at that period fulfil it. *In the darkness*, said he, *which has been produced by the extinction of all historical lights, one can only gradually regain one's sight and learn to discern individual objects.*[2] It was his hope that future research would be more fruitful in this respect. And this has come to pass. Strauss bequeathed to his successors, aside from the elimination of the super-

[1] P. 94.—[2] To his friend Binder, 12 Mai 1836, in Th. Ziegler's *David Friedrich Strauss*, I, Strassburg, 1908, p. 171.

natural, practised already by Reimarus and the rationalists, the conviction that the so-called Gospel of Saint John, in comparison with the three others, was of little value for a historical life of Jesus.

It is true, however, that Strauss did not find direct successors within the next twenty years or more. For the next phase of liberal German theology, which received its character from the historical school of Ferdinand Christian Baur, of Tübingen († 1860), scarcely brought direct results for the Jesus-research. That was the consequence of the conception of the earliest Christian history peculiar to the Tübingen school. Here the Catholic church of the closing second century was considered as the ultimate result of a long controversy between the Jewish Christianity of the first apostles and their followers and the liberal party of Paul. In the course of this controversy, which gradually smoothed down the contrast of the respective parties, all New Testament books were regarded by Baur as having played their part. They were considered as having been written for the purpose of maintaining partial views, at first unre-

strictedly but then more or less with a conciliatory spirit. About Jesus little was said. His person stood in the darkness which preceded the controversy. His character was only vaguely seen in the Gospels, which were considered as quite later writings, treating their material in a by no means impartial way. Yet the Tübingen school has indirectly promoted the task proposed by Strauss. Firstly, the literary criticism of the sources, neglected by Strauss, was taken in hand. Later science, it is true, did not accept to a large extent that which the Tübingen school considered as being proved. Nevertheless the Tübingen school has inaugurated the modern biblical criticism. Secondly, the Tübingen school justified in the eyes of many scholars the instinctive distrust felt by Strauss for the fourth Gospel. Till this day the position of most liberal theologians with regard to the Gospel of Saint John is to some extent conditioned by the judgment of Baur. Lastly, the Tübingen school brought to light the seriousness of a question only touched upon by Strauss, the question whether Jesus clung to Jewish particularism or whether he himself inaugurated

the universalism of later Christianity. The most important of these three points is the first: the Tübingen school stimulated serious work in the field of New Testament criticism.

In the generation after Strauss this work had good results in respect to the synoptic Gospels, in Strauss' opinion the main sources for the life of Jesus. These results not only deviated from Baur in giving up step by step his dates for the Gospels, but also produced a new hypothesis about their genesis. Baur adhered to the hypothesis of Griessbach († 1812) who considered Saint Mark as an epitomizer of the two other synoptic Gospels. Then (after 1838) arose the hypothesis that our second Gospel, or a similar work of the same author, had been used by the other synoptics and, therefore, was the oldest Gospel. Besides Saint Mark theological science recognized a second source, used by the first and third evangelists, which contained principally sayings of Jesus.

Before these results were widely accepted, Theodor Keim, of Zürich († at Giessen, 1878), holding modified Tübingen views, published in 1861 an outline of *The Human Development of*

Jesus,[1] which may be called the first sketch of his later *Life of Jesus*,[2] the first sketch also of the liberal Jesus-picture. Keim, it is true, considered Saint Matthew and not Saint Mark the oldest evangelist. Nevertheless his historical description has great likeness to that of the later liberal theologians who built upon Saint Mark, for the sequence of events in Saint Matthew is nearly the same as in Saint Mark. I shall not separate Keim's *Outline* from his later work nor yet do I intend to give a summary of his *Life of Jesus*. Not only because time is short, but still more because it would not do justice to Keim; for no brief summary can give an idea of the charm of his descriptive powers, nor could it show that he frequently reveals in the purely human Jesus a majesty which agrees better with the author's faith than with his historical research. I therefore confine myself to laying before you some characteristics of his conception of the life of Jesus which are important for our subject because they were of great influence for

[1] Th. Keim, *Die menschliche Entwicklung Jesu Christi. Akademische Antrittsrede am 17 Dezember*, 1860, Zürich, 1861.

[2] Th. Keim, *Die Geschichte Jesu von Nazara*, 3 vols., Zürich, 1867–72.

that conception of Jesus which is understood when we speak of the "liberal Jesus-picture."

Firstly, the Johannine account which mentions, as will be seen more accurately later, many journeys of Jesus to Jerusalem, and, therefore, divides his public life between Galilee and Judea, is put aside as being unhistorical; Jesus worked only in Galilee and the neighborhood until he journeyed to Jerusalem to the "Death Passover," as Keim calls it.

Secondly, where Saint Luke diverges from the other synoptics Keim follows the latter. He dismisses the appearances of the risen Jesus in Saint Luke, and even the appearance to the women at Jerusalem related by the first Gospel, as being unhistorical. Keim, as well as later liberal biographers of Jesus, building upon Saint Mark, knows only of appearances in Galilee. The disciples, he thinks, fled to Galilee immediately after the capture of their Master.

Thirdly, the stories of the childhood in the first and third Gospels are also put aside. Yet much is told about the development of Jesus on the ground of conclusions from his later life.

Fourthly, at the baptism by John, Jesus be-

came conscious of his Messianic calling, and after the imprisonment of the Baptist he considered that his hour had come and appeared publicly in Galilee as a teacher.

Fifthly, there followed a short period of only four months of happy activity in Galilee, the "Galilean Spring," as it has been called by Keim, and often since by many others. The main subject of Jesus' preaching at this time was, according to Keim, the kingdom of God. Jesus did not exclude the Jewish ideas of a supernatural coming of the kingdom at the end of this world, but he laid stress upon the spiritual and moral character of this kingdom and always dismissed all thoughts of an earthly Messiah. Nor did he declare himself to be the Messiah in this Galilean period. Keim allows that Jesus, besides his preaching, healed many sick people, but he does not understand this in the sense of supernatural miracles. In stories which cannot be naturally explained, as for instance the story of the raising of Jairus's daughter, he sees an exaggeration of the tradition.

Sixthly, the continuation of this activity in Galilee was made impossible to Jesus by the

increasing enmity of the Scribes and Pharisees. After the execution of the Baptist he felt himself forced out of Galilee. His wanderings to Bethsaida, to Gadara, to the confines of Tyre, and to Cæsarea Philippi are "ways of flight," as Keim says. On these wanderings the resolve to give his life another turn ripens within him. He recognizes that he must in Jerusalem oppose his enemies with a revelation of his Messianic dignity. The confession of Peter at Cæsarea Philippi, *Thou art the Christ*, is the turning-point. Jesus now begins to prophesy his Passion and then he sets out for Jerusalem.

Seventhly, he there reveals himself as the Messiah, first by his entrance and afterward by cleansing the temple and contending with the Pharisees. But he soon sees that his way leads to his end, and in the idea that his death would be an atonement, a sacrifice constituting a new covenant, his thoughts of death, at first restless and hesitating, ultimately found peace.

Finally, we may remark that Keim, in the framework of the history he tells, has great knowledge of things never related by the sources. He knows how Jesus was affected by the execu-

tion of the Baptist. He interprets the wanderings outside Galilee as "ways of flight," though no source tells us anything of this kind. He sees in Jesus at this time the ripening of the thought that his activity must in the future be of another kind. He knows how in his restless striving after light and in his stormy and feverish groping there rose in Jesus, though not quite on the level of his former ideas, the thought that his death would be the sacrifice of the New Covenant.

Already Keim's *Outline*, of 1860, was, in spite of its small dimensions, regarded by Heinrich Holtzmann in 1863 as a work as useful as any other of the period since Strauss. Indeed, Holtzmann, together with Bernhard Weiss the most successful defender of the priority of Saint Mark, has, in spite of this divergence from Keim, been strongly influenced by him in his conception of the life of Jesus. But even before Keim had published his great work, Holtzmann in his book on the synoptic Gospels[1] in 1863 gave a sketch of the life of Jesus[2] which, perhaps, more than Keim's work influenced the views of liberal

[1] H. J. Holtzmann, *Die synoptischen Evangelien*, Leipsic, 1863.
[2] L. c., pp. 468–496.

German theologians. His reconstruction of the life of Jesus is in all essential points the same as Keim's. The above-mentioned characteristics in Keim suit Holtzmann too. Holtzmann, it is true, is more reserved in his construction. He therefore criticises some points in Keim's development of Jesus. But, on the other hand, his greater trust in Saint Mark reveals to him many details more accurately than Keim saw them. Holtzmann believes he can distinguish no less than seven phases of the public life of Jesus in Galilee. It is, therefore, very significant that Holtzmann criticises the judgment of the famous historian, Barthold Georg Niebuhr, who, in 1812, thought it impossible to sketch a critically tenable history of Jesus. Such a judgment, said Holtzmann,[1] could now, fifty years after Niebuhr, only be regarded as a prejudice. In fact, it was the opinion of liberal German theology that a reliable knowledge of the life of Jesus, based on Saint Mark, had been attained. Keim and Holtzmann have, in connection with earlier and later research, drawn the outline of the Jesus-picture which for more than a generation

[1] L. c., p. 497.

was considered by liberal theology to be the picture of the historical Jesus.

Of course, the pictures painted by liberal theology down to the end of the century are not wholly identical. On the one side, even in Saint Mark unhistorical traits were found; on the other, the trust in his narration was so great that rationalistic interpretation revived, so that the frame remained intact, whereas the picture was retouched in a rationalistic manner. On the one side, only the details of the prophecies of Jesus' passion and resurrection were criticised; on the other, such utterances of Jesus were wholly put aside. On the one side, in the eschatological sayings of Jesus, as read in the Gospels, a kernel of genuine words of Jesus was found, a kernel regarded as not being in opposition to Jesus' spiritual conception of the kingdom of heaven; on the other side, in the great eschatological utterance (in Mark 13 and parallels) a Jewish-Christian apocalypse of the time of the Jewish war was recognized, and almost the whole of this utterance, therefore, was considered not to be genuine words of Jesus. Yet these differences, with a few exceptions to be

mentioned hereafter, only point to variations of the same type.

How deeply rooted the conviction was that this was the historical type was shown by the reception of Renan's *Life of Jesus*[1] after 1863. Renan, who, though supporting himself on German criticism, had reverted to rationalistic views æsthetically transfigured and poetically and sentimentally dressed up, was not able to divert German scholars from their way. Strauss too, in his *Life of Jesus for the German People*, of 1864,[2] accepted in its essential points the liberal Jesus-picture. This picture was also received by dictionaries of general information. It was regarded as the picture of the historical Jesus in its distinction from the Christ of the dogmas;[3] the soaring flight of pious Christological impostures, as Holtzmann called them,[4] was ridiculed.

[1] E. Renan, *La vie de Jésus*, Paris, 1863.—[2] D. F. Strauss, *Das Leben Jesu für das deutsche Volk bearbeitet*, Leipsic, 1864.

[3] Comp. *Jesus v. Nazareth im Wortlaut eines kritischbearbeiteten Einheitsevangeliums dargestellt von W. Hess*, Tübingen, 1900.

[4] In *Die synopt. Evangelien*. p. 7, he characterizes Keim's outline in the following manner: *Eine akademische Antrittsrede, die dem himmelstürmenden Hochfluge des frommen christologischen Schwindels . . . die ganze Macht und Klarheit der unmittelbar empfindbaren Wirklichkeit entgegensetzt.*

But even before 1900 a phase of the Jesus-research was announced which was new in two respects.

More skeptical views, which saw in Saint Mark also more symptoms of exaggerating tradition than traces of eye-witnesses, had never been quite silent since Strauss. One of these skeptics, who afterward had followers, especially in Holland, Gustav Volkmar, of Zürich († 1893),[1] a pupil of Baur, as early as in 1882 defended the assertion that Jesus was considered to be the Messiah only after his death. This signified nothing less than a heavy blow for everything which liberal theology had hitherto set forth with regard to the rise and development of the Messianic self-consciousness of Jesus.

A second critical opposition to the liberal Jesus-picture arose from quite another quarter, since Baldensperger, at Giessen, in 1888,[2] on the ground of the apocalyptic literature, which had not been hitherto sufficiently appreciated, had shown that the Messianic hope of the time

[1] G. Volkmar, *Jesus Nazarenus und die erste christliche Zeit, mit den beiden ersten Erzählern*, Zürich, 1882.

[2] W. Baldensperger, *Das Selbstbewusstsein Jesu im Lichte der messianischen Hoffnungen seiner Zeit*, Strassburg, 1888.

of Jesus was determined not by the worldly political but by the supernatural eschatological form of the Messianic thoughts. Baldensperger himself did not yet draw the consequences from this view with regard to Jesus' preaching about the kingdom of God. But Johannes Weiss, at that time at Marburg, did so somewhat later,[1] inspired by the prize essays of two German clergymen.[2] Jesus' preaching of the kingdom of God, such was Weiss' opinion in 1892, is to be understood merely eschatologically. Hence his ethics is characterized by a world-renouncing ascetic trait. His Messianic consciousness also, expressed in the name *Son of Man*, participates in the transcendental and apocalyptic character of the conception of the kingdom of heaven. These assertions, too, seriously affected the prevailing views about the character of the Messianic self-consciousness of Jesus.

The first tendency, which recommended an elimination of the eschatology, was strength-

[1] J. Weiss, *Die Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes*, Göttingen, 1892.

[2] E. Issel, *Die Lehre vom Reiche Gottes im Neuen Testament. Eine von der Haager Gesellschaft . . . gekrönte Preisschrift*, Leyden, 1891; O. Schmoller, *Die Lehre vom Reiche Gottes in den Schriften des Neuen Testaments. Bearbeitung einer von der Haager Gesellschaft . . . gestellten Aufgabe*, Leyden, 1891.

ened when, in 1896, Lietzmann, now at Jena, undertook to prove that Jesus never called himself "Son of Man."[1] The second tendency, by which, on the contrary, the eschatology was placed in the centre, was promoted by the increasing interest in the history of religions. For the stranger an idea, when understood by means of the comparative history of religion, appeared to modern thought, the more confidently did the supporters of religious history believe that its true meaning had been found.

The new phase of the Jesus-research, announced and prepared in this manner by the closing nineteenth century, made itself felt in the beginning of the twentieth.

First to be mentioned is William Wrede, of Breslau († 1906), who ever since our student days had been a dear friend of mine and whom I esteemed for his purity and fine feeling and highly valued for his learning and his sagacity, in spite of our theological differences. In 1901 he published his book, *The Messiah-Mystery in the Gospels* (*i. e.*, the secret of Messiahship).[2] Here the

[1] H. Lietzmann, *Der Menschensohn*, Freiburg, 1896.—[2] W. Wrede, *Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien*, Göttingen, 1901.

skepticism of Volkmar was combined with influences from the school of comparative religious history. And it was just this combination that made Wrede's book a strong attack on the Jesus-picture hitherto prevailing in liberal theology.

Here, too, I can single out only the most characteristic points.

Firstly, Jesus was, according to Wrede, considered to be the Messiah only after his disciples had believed in his resurrection. Then at first the Messiahship was understood in the sense that Jesus would soon come on the clouds of heaven and establish his kingdom; later the Messianic dignity of Jesus was referred back to his earthly life. An intermediate stage in this development is seen in Saint Mark. Frequently, it is true, Saint Mark repeats the later tradition, which pictures Jesus in his earthly life as the Messiah; as, for instance, at the entry into Jerusalem and in his confession before the high priest. And Saint Mark occasionally makes Jesus confess himself as the Messiah even in the beginnings of his activity. But essentially Saint Mark, according to Wrede, has another theory. Wrede characterizes it by the term he invented,

as "the Messiah-mystery." During the earthly life of Jesus, that is the meaning of this term, only the devils and the intimate companions of Jesus knew of his Messiahship; to others, in conformity with Jesus' orders, this mystery remained hidden until after the resurrection. Such, according to Wrede, is Saint Mark's main theory.

Secondly, the very juxtaposition of this theory and the traces of the opinion that Jesus already in his earthly life revealed his Messiahship makes the narrative of Saint Mark hazy and psychologically incomprehensible. It becomes still less conceivable, according to Wrede, because it presupposes a superhuman dignity of Jesus as the son of God in a supernatural sense. Hence it is governed by a dogmatic theory, not by the author's insight into psychological necessities. A real knowledge of the life of Jesus is not to be found in Saint Mark.

Thirdly, those lives of Jesus, therefore, which assert a development of his Messianic self-consciousness and of his revelation of it, and a gradual education of the disciples to Jesus' own understanding of his Messianic calling, cannot be supported by Saint Mark. For Saint Mark

knows nothing of such development. Moreover, these modern descriptions of the life of Jesus suffer in different degree from false psychologizing. Often they behave themselves as if they were acquainted with the most intimate emotions and reflections of Jesus.

Fourthly, the question whether Jesus considered himself to be the Messiah at all, is left undecided by Wrede. If Jesus did so, the genuine tradition is so interwoven with later ones that it is not easy to recognize.

The impression of the whole of Wrede's treatment is, that we know much less about the life of Jesus than was assumed by the liberal theology. Above all, Wrede found difficulties which we cannot resolve in the catastrophe of Jesus' life. Thus the liberal Jesus-picture is declared by him to be untenable in all respects. Even the main turning-point in the life of Jesus, which, according to the liberal conception, is the confession of Peter at Cæsarea Philippi, is set aside as unhistorical.

In the same year, 1901, Albert Schweitzer published a sketch of the life of Jesus, which from the opposite side, by emphasizing the eschatological

idea, opposed the liberal Jesus-picture.[1] According to Schweitzer, Jesus lived completely in the eschatological Messianic ideas, based upon the near approach of the supernatural kingdom of heaven. The people, it is true, as well as John the Baptist, regarded him only as the forerunner of the Messiah. He himself thought the time when he was to reign as Messianic king immediately approaching. From his ethical instructions, therefore, we cannot separate the supposition that now the world would only last for a very short time; they proposed only *Interims-Ethics*, as Schweitzer says. When Jesus sent forth the twelve with the sermon of instructions, preserved in Saint Matthew 10, he expected that the end would come before their return. Disappointed in this expectation and obliged by the confession of Peter at Cæsarea Philippi to concede his Messiahship, he resolved to force the coming of the kingdom by his death. His entry into Jerusalem was for him himself a Messianic act, but the people greeted him only as Elijah, the precursor of the Messiah. In the

[1] A. Schweitzer, *Das Messianitäts- und Leidensgeheimnis. Eine Skizze des Lebens Jesu*, Tübingen, 1901.

disputes of the next days, also, Jesus did not reveal himself as the Messiah. But Judas betrayed to Jesus' enemies the secret of his Messiahship known to him since Cæsarea Philippi. The result was that Jesus met the death which he had recognized as being necessary for the coming of the Kingdom of God.

Of these two publications of the year 1901, Wrede's book very much occupied the attention of German scholars. Schweitzer's assertions were not valued as important until he himself qualified them as epoch-making in his second book, mentioned at the beginning of this lecture, whose title, *From Reimarus to Wrede*, should rather be *From Reimarus to Schweitzer*. Here Schweitzer considers it as a divine dispensation that Wrede's book and his own sketch appeared simultaneously. In both books, he proclaims, war is declared against the liberal Jesus-picture with its false psychology and affected historical clearness which could only modernize Jesus. The liberal Jesus-research is, in his opinion, on the point of suffering defeat. The historical truth, of course, is not found by Schweitzer in Wrede's ideas but in his

own consistently eschatological views. At the same time, he admits that this really historical Jesus, who with Messianic majesty tried to realize erroneous and antiquated hopes, can have no value for us. The historical knowledge of Jesus has become, so he thinks, an offence to religion. Only the idea of Christ, plucked out of its temporal soil, that is to say the spirit of Jesus, will overcome the world.

The friends of the liberal Jesus-picture have not given up their arms either to Wrede and Schweitzer or to Drews and Smith. I will prove this by only a few references to the copious literature of the most recent time. The gray-haired Holtzmann, who died in 1910, as late as 1907 contributed, as he said, to a revision of the judgment of death pronounced by Schweitzer upon the views hitherto defended by him.[1] Jülicher, in some ingenious, careful, and instructive lectures,[2] refused to accept Wrede's statements, but he did it with great esteem for Wrede himself,

[1] H. J. Holtzmann, *Das messianische Selbstbewusstsein Jesu*, Tübingen, 1907; *Die Marcus-Kontroverse in ihrer heutigen Gestalt* (*Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, Leipsic, 1907, pp. 18–40, 161–207.)—[2] A. Jülicher, *Neue Linien in der Kritik der evangelischen Überlieferung*, Giessen, 1906.

while he treated the assertions of Schweitzer with supreme sarcasm. In opposition to Drews and Smith, Weinel confidently gave a negative answer to the question, *Is the liberal Jesus-picture refuted?*[1] And only a few months ago Heitmüller, in his article "Jesus Christ" in the *Handwörterbuch* of Schiele and Zscharnack, essentially followed the lines of liberal theology.

But Jülicher concedes that in an examination of the sources the subjectivity of the examiner cannot be completely excluded, and that for this reason alone an objectively true and absolutely indisputable picture of Jesus will not be delineated by historical science. Weinel openly acknowledged many faults in the liberal Jesus-research, and an interesting question arises from the manner in which he pronounces Jesus as "the essence and standard of all Christianity, and even more than this,"[2] although his Jesus-picture remains within purely human limits. The question is, whether, if the whole of Christianity one day should agree with his views, a Christological development would not begin the

[1] H. Weinel, *Ist das "liberale" Jesusbild widerlegt? Eine Antwort an seine "positiven" und seine radikalen Gegner mit besondrer Rücksicht auf A. Drews, Die Christusmythe*, Tübingen, 1910.—[2] P. 20.

next day which would destroy the framework of the purely human conception of Jesus. Heitmüller, too, admits that the height of the self-consciousness of Jesus almost stupefies us and that it nearly surpasses the limits of humanity.

Thus we see that confidence in the reliability of the liberal Jesus-picture has been shattered. Besides, the critical opposition is still alive. The skepticism of Wrede and the eschatological zeal of Schweitzer did not die out. A point of view quite similar to Wrede's is held by no less a critic than Julius Wellhausen.[1] And the skepticism of Wrede is even surpassed by Wellhausen in undermining the reliability of the biblical sayings of Jesus: his exclusive confidence in Saint Mark prevents him from doing justice to the words of Jesus, preserved only by the first and third evangelists, and in Saint Mark, too, he finds much spurious matter in the sayings of Jesus. Even the word "gospel" is considered as a term first set in circulation by the Christian mission.

[1] J. Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Marci, übersetzt und erklärt*, Berlin, 1903; *Das Evangelium Matthaei usw.*, Berlin, 1904; *Das Evangelium Lucae usw.*, Berlin, 1904; *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien*, Berlin, 1905; *Das Evangelium Johannis*, Berlin, 1908. Comp. espec. *Einleitung in die drei usw.*, pp. 89–115.

About the life of Jesus more is known, according to Wellhausen, than about his sayings. But a development in the life of Jesus is to be found in Saint Mark only by false interpretation. And the tale of Saint Mark that Jesus went to Jerusalem in order to be crucified there is untenable. The suffering Messiah and the entire conception of the Messiah, as understood by the Christians, is an idea which first grew up with the belief in the resurrection of Jesus. Wellhausen concedes that Jesus during his lifetime was held by his disciples to be the Messiah in the Jewish sense. But Jesus himself, according to Wellhausen, was more reserved in this respect. Perhaps he ultimately confessed himself as the Messiah before the high priest. But really he did not wish to be more than a sower who scattered the seed of the word of God and strove to prepare a religious regeneration of his nation. Had he not died he would scarcely have become a historical person. He never spoke to his disciples either about his death or about his resurrection, to say nothing about his silence as to his second coming.[1]

This conception of Wellhausen's is a small frag-

[1] J. Wellhausen, *Einleitung*, p. 115.

ment of the liberal Jesus-picture. The rest has gone to pieces. Wellhausen himself confesses that the historical Jesus as the foundation of our religion is a doubtful and insufficient compensation for that which has been lost with the gospel. This is a confession of the shipwreck of the liberal Jesus-research which only knows a human Jesus.[1]

Schweitzer's ideas, too, apart from his abstruse fancies, did not find opposition alone. For the emphasis laid on the eschatological element in the self-consciousness of Jesus has in Germany its friends, especially among younger theologians. And hence, too, it appears that liberal German Jesus-research is approaching shipwreck; for if even Oskar Holtzmann, although he is far from accepting Schweitzer's eschatological views, already saw in Jesus an ecstatic person,[2] still less can a sound human consciousness be found in a Jesus as pictured by Schweitzer. Of course, the objectionable book of the Danish philologist and theologian Rasmussen, and the scarcely more pleasing work of the Ger-

[1] *L. c.*—[2] O. Holtzmann, *War Jesus ein Ekstatiker?* Tübingen, 1903.

man physician De Loosten,[1] two books in which the psychical soundness of Jesus is discussed and denied, cannot be charged to German theology. But it is significant that an ultra-liberal German theologian who, to a certain extent, accepted Schweitzer's assertions, took into account the possibility that we may find in Jesus traits of psychological abnormalities.[2] If the purely human conception of Jesus were forced to accept this, then here too would be a confession of its shipwreck.

Yet this judgment and the similar ones pronounced above are but anticipations. To-day I must come to a close here. The question whether the Jesus-research, dealing only with a human Jesus, has produced tenable results will occupy us in the next two lectures.

[1] E. Rasmussen, *Jesus. Eine psychopathologische Studie, übertragen und herausgegeben von Rottenburg*, Leipsic, 1905; De Loosten, *Jesus Christus vom Standpunkte des Psychiaters*, Bamberg, 1905. Comp. H. Werner, *Die psychische Gesundheit Jesu* (*Biblische Zeit- und Streitfragen*, IV, 12), Gross-Lichterfelde, 1908.

[2] G. Hollmann, in *Theol. Rundschau*, IX, Tübingen, 1906, p. 275.

III

LIBERAL JESUS-RESEARCH AND THE SOURCES

IN the preceding lecture we obtained a survey of the liberal German Jesus-research, that is to say, that branch of German Jesus-research which considers Jesus a purely human being. We have also seen that critics, reasoning from quite opposite points of view, arrive at the result that the liberal Jesus-research has suffered shipwreck. However differently they may think in other respects, in this verdict William Benjamin Smith and Albert Schweitzer do agree. Are they right in pronouncing this verdict? Has the liberal German Jesus-research really led to no tenable results? This is the question which is now to engage our attention.

One would deem it an easy task to give a negative answer to this question. For it is not difficult to quote one scholar against the other, and, because of the many discordant views of the

different scholars, to impress their contradictions so strongly upon the hearers that they lose all confidence in this contradictory historical research. But this is not the way to settle the question. For, in the first place, much difficult study, for instance the criticism of the synoptic Gospels, has only gradually worked its way out of the chaos of wild hypotheses, each depriving the other of light and breath. And, in the second place, we cannot deny that, *e. g.*, the views of Heitmüller in Schiele and Zscharnack's *Handwörterbuch* are held to be correct by a great number of scholars even at the present day. Quite a number of historical truths would no longer hold their own if we were to recognize as certain those only which have been generally accepted.

Nor can we prove that the liberal German Jesus-research has suffered shipwreck by merely pointing out that the certainty with which Theodor Keim once thought he had penetrated into the details of the real life of Jesus and his development, proved to be illusive. Even though a few scholars follow similar lines to-day, *e. g.*, Oskar Holtzmann, still this phase of Jesus-re-

search belongs to the past. Many of the scholars dealing with a purely human life of Jesus will agree with the complaints of W. B. Smith and Schweitzer regarding unjustifiable sharp-sightedness and false psychologizing in the older liberal Jesus-research. Trivial criticism of mistakes made by the older scholars and admitted by the later ones themselves does not discredit the whole attempt to sketch a purely human life of Jesus.

We must go to work far more seriously. Let us discuss our question in a twofold manner, historically to-day, theologically in the next lecture. I shall first explain what I mean by this twofold manner.

History has to reckon with the analogy from other experience. No Protestant will find fault with historical research for relegating to the sphere of fiction or misunderstanding or exaggerating the miracles told in the Catholic lives of saints. Everything that is impossible according to all our experience is to be put aside as being unhistorical. For historical research has to make clear in its genetic connection what happened in the past; and, as measure for what

is possible, it has to employ our experience. If we read in a text-book of modern history that the death of Queen Victoria on the 22d of January, 1901, was the occasion for memorial services in Canada as early as the 23d of January, we have no reason to doubt this. Ten years ago the telegraph carried news across the ocean. But if an eighteenth-century report were to tell us that the death of George Whitefield, which occurred on September 20, 1770, in Newburyport, Mass., was the occasion for a memorial service by John Wesley on the 1st of October of the same year, we should have to conclude that this could not be true. In those days what happened here in America could only have become known in England several weeks later. Again, we shall not doubt the report that Wesley held a memorial service for his old friend in London on the 18th of November, 1770, even if we do not know who brought the news of Whitefield's death to England. It is sufficient for us to know that, according to our knowledge of the means of communication between England and America at that time, the report could have been in England at that date.

Thus, historical science is often in a position to recognize a fact upon contemporary evidence, although it is not known by what it was caused. If there is a possible cause to be presumed, our ignorance regarding this cause does not matter. But where we cannot find any cause which, according to our experience, is possible, then every conscientious historian is prevented from speaking of a historical fact. Hence, when historians are forced by credible reports to recognize a fact as having really occurred, they must assume causes lying within the sphere of our experience.

From this it follows that historical science, when investigating the life of Jesus, must take into consideration the supposition that it was a purely human life and that nothing happened in it which falls outside the sphere of human experience. Giving up this supposition would mean admitting that the life of Jesus, or this or that event in his life, is incommensurable for historical science.

Permit me to illustrate this by an example. It is a fact, which Reimarus was wrong in trying to push aside, that the disciples of Jesus

were convinced of his resurrection. Historical science, therefore, is not only allowed but also obliged to explain this conviction of the resurrection of Jesus from causes lying within the sphere of natural human experience. If historians come to the conclusion that such an explanation is impossible, then they will have to say: "Here historical knowledge and the possibility of scientific historical perception cease; for the historian does not come to a satisfactory solution of this question, nor can he do so; here he comes into touch with the sphere of religious belief." This was the position of the famous historian Leopold von Ranke[1] regarding Christ's resurrection. But as long as a historian does not declare his science to be incompetent, he must look for a natural explanation of the faith of the disciples. No description of the life of Jesus that recognizes supernatural factors is purely historical. An author treating his subject in some chapters as a historian would do, but elsewhere emancipating himself from the analogy of human experience, will produce a mixture of history and assertions of faith. And,

[1] *Weltgeschichte*, III, Leipsic, 1883, p. 169.

in my opinion, this combination of heterogeneous modes of consideration is to be welcomed neither by a believing Christian nor by a scholarly historian. Every one who undertakes the task of writing a life of Jesus comparable to historical biographies and, like these, requiring scientific consent of the reader, is forced to suppose that his life was a purely human one. If, on the contrary, the life of Jesus cannot be understood as a purely human one, then historical science may give from its sources evidence to this or that of the doings or sufferings or sayings of Jesus, but to do full justice to his life and his person is beyond its limits. The latter is my conviction.

If I attempt to prove its soundness to you, then, after what I have said above, a twofold task lies before me.

First, I shall have to show that nobody, relying on the supposition that Jesus was a purely human being, is able to write a really historical life of Jesus; and, secondly, I shall have to make evident that this supposition itself, although necessary for scientific historical treatment of the subject, is yet a false one. The first proof

requires, as I said, historical discussion, and the second cannot be furnished without theological argumentation.

To-day only the former one will occupy us. To-day, therefore, I let pass the supposition that the life of Jesus was a purely human one. To-day I do not wish to do anything beyond attempting to prove that on this supposition a really historical life of Jesus and a historically tenable picture of Jesus' personality cannot be built up.

Only that description and conception is historically justifiable which does justice to the sources of our historical knowledge and is tenable in itself. For to-day, therefore, our subject has two principal parts: we have, first, to test that criticism of sources which is made necessary by the supposition of a purely human life of Jesus; and, secondly, we have to ascertain whether by means of this criticism a tenable reconstruction is attained of that which really happened, a tenable description of the life of Jesus and a tenable conception of his personality.

Now the criticism of the sources is a double one: research has, in the first place, to ascertain

what the sources are, from what time they date, from whom they come; and, in the second place, it has to form an opinion as to the value of the sources; that is, what amount of credibility we may assign to them. Both these questions in the Gospel of John are intricately intertwined. Therefore, I cannot first treat the former question with regard to the synoptic Gospels and John, and then the second one likewise for all our Gospels. But it is just as impossible to discuss both questions, first, with regard to the synoptics, then, with regard to John. For the question of the credibility of the synoptics cannot be settled without reference to the Gospel of John. I should, therefore, like to go a middle way. At first we shall confine ourselves to the synoptics, in which liberal theologians since Strauss see the real source of the life of Jesus.

Here research since the time of Strauss has led to widely recognized results. There are, it is true, even scholars of repute, like Theodor Zahn, who hold an Aramaic Gospel of the apostle Matthew, closely resembling our first Gospel, to have been the oldest Gospel. Nevertheless, the ruling view, and to my mind the correct one, is

that the Gospel of Mark, or a more original form of it not essentially different from ours, was the first Gospel. The Gospels of Matthew and Luke are dependent on it; the arrangement of the materials in Mark determines the order of the stories in the other two. This is especially noticeable in Luke. He follows the order of Mark up to the journey of Jesus to the Passover in Jerusalem at the time of his death, *i. e.*, to 9: 51. Then he introduces materials which he did not find in Mark; but nine chapters farther on he again returns to the description of Mark. Thus, it would seem as if everything between 9: 51 and 18: 14 happened on the journey from Galilee to Judea. These chapters are, therefore, called Luke's "report of the journey." This "report of the journey" is the clearest proof of Luke's dependence on Mark. For, if Luke had possessed any knowledge of the order of events apart from Mark, he would not have introduced his new material so helplessly into the framework of Mark.

Just as certain as the fact that Mark is one of the sources of the first and third Gospels is the other fact that the first and the third evan-

gelists had a second common source in a book probably originally written in Aramaic but made use of by them in a Greek translation. This book contained chiefly sayings of Jesus, and is, therefore, often called "collection of sayings." The differences of opinion about the reconstruction of this lost source are of minor importance for the questions which occupy us. But it may be mentioned that, as is generally recognized, the first, and particularly the third, evangelist had special sources in addition to the aforenamed two.

These outlines of synoptic criticism may be looked upon as certain. Their recognition has nothing to do with the question whether the life of Jesus is to be considered as purely human or not.

But it is this very question that makes it difficult for many scholars to form an unbiassed opinion about the date of these sources. Through Strauss and the Tübingen school, who, it is true, did not possess our knowledge of the sources of the synoptics, the tendency had arisen to come as far down as possible in fixing the date of the Gospels. Strauss undoubtedly came to this

view from his desire to obtain as much time as possible for the growing of myths. At present, critics have everywhere recognized that it is not correct to date the Gospels so late. But still they often defend pretty late dates. Jülicher, *e. g.*, admits only the "collection of sayings" to be earlier than the year 70; the Gospel of Mark is placed by him shortly after 70, Matthew shortly before 100, and Luke in the time between 80 and 100. Yet it is shown by a recent publication of Adolf Harnack,[1] that even critical theology can come to quite different results. In this new book Harnack is defending the opinion that the Acts were written at the same time as that in which their narrative closes; that is, the time when Saint Paul had been in captivity at Rome for two years. According to Harnack, this second year of Paul's Roman captivity ended in the year 59.[2] According to an inscription, which Harnack did not make use of, the year 61 or 62 is probably more correct.[3]

[1] A. Harnack, *Neue Untersuchungen zur Apostelgeschichte und zur Abfassungszeit der synoptischen Evangelien*, Leipsic, 1911.—[2] *Die Chronologie der altchristlichen Litteratur*, I, Leipsic, 1897, p. 239.

[3] Comp. H. Lietzmann, *Ein neuer Fund zur Chronologie des Paulus* (*Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie*, 53, 1911, pp.

Earlier than the Acts, hence before 61 or 62 A. D., the Gospel of Luke must have been written. Of a still earlier date must be the first copy at least of the Gospel of Mark which Luke made use of and which probably is essentially identical with the Gospel published by Mark in later years. It is still farther back, about 50 A. D. or even earlier, that Harnack places the "collection of sayings," while he dates our first Gospel shortly after 70.

The reasons which Harnack gives in favor of these dates are undoubtedly worthy of consideration, though not convincing.[1] But even if I were convinced, I should be sure that Harnack would not do away with the later dates which are defended by liberal theologians. The very interest in a purely human life of Jesus will prevent the critics from recognizing in the great eschatological sermon of Luke 21 a prophecy of Jesus about the destruction of Jerusalem and

345–354). Since my lectures there have appeared: A. Deissmann, *Paulus, eine kultur- und religionsgeschichtliche Skizze*, Tübingen, 1911 (comp. pp. 159–177), and A. Harnack, *Chronologische Berechnung des "Tags von Damaskus"* (*Sitzungsberichte der königl. Preuss. Akademie der Wissenschaften*, 1912, pp. 673–682).

[1] I think, *e. g.*, Harnack has not done justice to the arguments which are in favor of seeing a reference to the Jewish war and the destruction of Jerusalem in Luke 21: 24.

from admitting so early a date to the Gospels. The supposition that the life of Jesus was a purely human one interferes with an impartial opinion on the question as to the date of the Gospels.

But I do not wish to lay much stress on this point. For liberal theology, in my opinion, may abandon the tendency to date the Gospels as late as possible without endangering its presuppositions. Legends arise much more quickly than is assumed by liberal theology since Strauss. Whenever a narrator undertakes to call up in somebody else the same deep impression which an event or an alarming piece of news had made upon himself, he is inclined to exaggerate, as every-day life teaches us. Gustavus Adolphus received two or three hostile shots through his arm and breast in the battle of Lützen on November 6, 1632. In two reports, written eight days after the event, though not by eye-witnesses, we are told that he received three bullet wounds and two stabs, and in another report, likewise not by an eye-witness, written on November 18, *i. e.*, twelve days after the battle, the two or three wounds have become seven (six

bullet wounds and one stab). Another report not made by an eye-witness, dated from two days earlier, even tells of a brilliant speech uttered by the dying king.[1] The reluctance of the liberal theology to accept an early date of the synoptic Gospels is, therefore, quite unnecessary.

For—and now we come to the intrinsic value of our sources—if the question were simply whether the synoptic Gospels were written by eye-witnesses or not, only then would it have been worth while to date them as late as possible in order to prove that they could not possibly have been written by contemporaries of Jesus. But that is not the question at all. It is only in the case of the "collection of sayings," which did not contain much narrative, that we may assume apostolic authorship—the authorship of Matthew according to tradition. But we cannot prove this. Our synoptic Gospels are nothing but the reflection of the tradition, oral and written, that existed in the congregations of their time. And in the case of Mark we have, as it seems, to do with oral tradition only. In addi-

[1] Comp. G. Droysen, *Die Schlacht bei Lützen* (*Forschungen zur deutschen Geschichte*), 1865, pp. 69–236.

tion to the oral tradition and the two written sources mentioned above, the only written material which the first evangelist could possibly have had was the genealogical table which he reproduces in chapter 1. Luke undoubtedly possessed other written sources besides the Gospel of Mark, besides the "collection of sayings," and besides his genealogical table of Jesus. In the first words of his Gospel he expressly refers to many others before him, who, as he says, *had taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word.*[1]

Under these circumstances, it must be granted that the first and third evangelists did not possess any personal knowledge, based on special traditions, about the course of events in the life of Jesus. Otherwise they would not have simply followed Mark in this respect. But naturally this does not signify that Mark was well acquainted with the course of the life of Jesus. Nevertheless, the liberal German Jesus-research

[1] Luke 1: 1, 2.

wrongly assumed this, though of late it has done so with decreasing confidence. We shall soon see why. For the present, permit me to return to the assumption itself for a moment. On what grounds was this confidence in the story of Mark founded? According to Eusebius,[1] Papias, a bishop in Asia Minor about 140 A. D., heard the following story about Mark from a man of the older generation: *Mark having been the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately, though not indeed in order, whatsoever of the things said and done by Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor followed him, but afterward, as I said, he followed Peter, who adapted his teaching to the needs of his hearers, but with no intention of giving a connected account of the Lord's discourses, so that Mark committed no error while he thus wrote some things as he remembered them.* From this passage people inferred that Mark reproduced reminiscences of Peter, and, therefore, they even spoke of traces of an eye-witness in Saint Mark. To me this appreciation of Mark by liberal theologians has always been a very striking illustration of the fact that even theologians who otherwise

[1] Eusebius, *H. E.*, 3, 39, 15.

are very skeptical toward tradition can have great faith in tradition when it serves their purpose. I myself think that this notice of Papias is of very doubtful value. It may have had its origin in the tendency of the later church to bring into connection with the apostles the two Gospels that do not bear an apostolic name. It need not be of greater value than the notice in Irenæus, that Luke wrote down the gospel preached by Paul.[1] Moreover, it is not at all improbable that this notice in Irenæus comes from the very same passage in Papias to which Eusebius owes the notice about Mark. In any case, if we trust the notice of Papias about Mark, we ought also to recognize the other fact which Papias mentions, viz., that Mark wrote what he wrote, *not indeed in order*. But this is ignored, while the former notice is accepted. And why?

The answer can only be: because the interest taken in a purely human life of Jesus favored this view. People wanted a chronological sketch, but they were not inclined to accept that of John. Hence, they presumed a correct

[1] *Irenæus adv. Hær.*, 3, 1, 2.

order of events was to be found in Saint Mark. Of John I shall speak in a moment. Even apart from the Johannine question it can be shown that Mark had no real knowledge of the course of the life of Jesus. Wrede has brought forward many arguments in favor of this point, which are independent of his theory about the Messiah-mystery. Everything in the line of development that people thought they could possibly discern in the narrative of Mark they discovered only by unjustifiable sharp-sightedness. If this is the case, then to prefer Mark above the other two synoptics, when viewed generally, that is, before the details are examined, is the result of a prejudice, a prejudice so unfounded that it proves the liberal Jesus-research to be in the wrong on this point.

This becomes more evident when we introduce the Gospel of John into the discussion. To Luther this Gospel was *the unique, gentle, principal Gospel.*[1] As late as the time of Schleier-

[1] *Vorrede zum Neuen Testament, Erlanger Ausgabe, deutsche Schriften*, 63, 115: "Weilan Johannes gar wenig Werk von Christo, aber gar viel seiner Predigt schreibt, wiederum die andern drei Evangelisten viel seiner Werk, wenig seiner Worte beschreiben: ist Johannis Evangelium das einige zarte, rechte Hauptevangelium und den andern dreien weit, weit vorzuziehen und höher zu heben."

macher it was valued far more highly than the synoptics. But Strauss eliminated it from the real sources for the life of Jesus. And all the friends of the liberal Jesus-research, together with Schweitzer, appreciate this as a great merit.

For the Gospel of John really throws insurmountable obstacles in the way of describing a purely human life of Jesus. We shall have to glance at these difficulties before proceeding.

They are based at first on the evangelist's opinion of Jesus. For him Jesus is *the Word of God, become flesh*,[1] *i. e.*, the most perfect revelation of God. His Gospel leads up to the confession of Thomas, *My Lord and my God*.[2] If this Gospel is written by the apostle John, and if he is, as the Gospel at any rate then would certainly show, *the disciple whom Jesus loved*,[3] the disciple who on the night before the death of Jesus was leaning on Jesus' bosom[4]—then liberal Jesus-research will have considerable difficulty in maintaining its view against that of the disciple who cast the deepest glance into the heart of Jesus. Moreover, if we may trust the words of Jesus reported in this fourth Gos-

[1] John 1 : 14.—[2] John 20 : 28.—[3] John 13 : 23; 19 : 26; 20 : 2; 21 : 7, 20.—[4] John 13 : 23.

pel, then they unquestionably reveal in Jesus a self-consciousness which does not agree with a purely human life of him. Furthermore, some miraculous works are told about Jesus in this Gospel which suit a purely human Jesus no better. I mention only the raising of Lazarus.[1] Finally—and this is of special importance—the sketch of the life of Jesus in this Gospel differs from that in the synoptics in most essential points. In the synoptic Gospels Jesus, after being baptized in Judea by John, first worked in Galilee exclusively. He only comes to Jerusalem for his Death-Passover. And according to the Gospel of Mark, which is supported in this respect only by the apocryphal Gospel of Peter, Jesus appears to his disciples as the Risen One only in Galilee. In the Gospel of John, however, Jesus, in consequence of his journeys to religious feasts, is represented as being in Judea and Jerusalem four times between his baptism and his passion.[2] And the appearances of the risen Lord are, if we ignore the appendix to the Gospel, chapter 21, all located in Jerusalem, just as

[1] John 11 : 1 *ff.*—[2] John 2 : 13–3 : 21; (comp. 4 : 1); 5 : 1–6 : 1; 7 : 10–10 : 21; 10 : 22–39; 12 : 12 *ff.*

is the case in the Gospel of Luke. If this narrative of the appearances of the risen Jesus was written by the apostle John, then it would be difficult for liberal theologians to deny that the grave of Jesus on the third day was empty; then they would have to give up the contention found everywhere in liberal Jesus-research that the disciples of Jesus immediately after his capture fled in a fright to Galilee and that there, far from the grave, which fiction only later turned into an opened one, they came to the impression that they had seen the Lord.

I could mention other traits in the fourth Gospel that do not agree with a purely human conception of the life of Jesus, *e. g.*, the words on the cross which are here given.[1] But the examples I have quoted will suffice to make it evident that the purely human conception of Jesus forces its supporters to declare that the fourth Gospel does not come from John; moreover, that it is not worthy of belief. But by doing so it proves itself, from a really historical point of view, unable to do full justice to the sources.

For from the really historical point of view

[1] John 19 : 26–30.

the following, to my mind, is certain for a man whose judgments are unbiassed:

Firstly, the Gospel of John cannot have been written later than about 110 A. D., as Harnack, too, admits,[1] although he attributes the authorship to another John, who is not the apostle. For the Gospel is known to Justin Martyr,[2] who was converted to Christianity at Ephesus about 130; and before 117 the letters of Ignatius show that Ignatius was influenced by the sayings of Jesus reported in the fourth Gospel.[3] The tradition that the apostle John, still living in the year 98, wrote this Gospel in his old age,[4] cannot, therefore, as far as the date of the Gospel's origin is concerned, be proved to be incorrect.

Secondly, the tradition that John the apostle wrote the Gospel is old. Polykrates of Ephesus,[5] about 190, and Irenæus,[6] about 185, are not the first witnesses. This tradition existed when about 170 the so-called Alogoi opposed it,[7] and

[1] *Chronologie, etc.*, I, 674.—[2] Th. Zahn, *Geschichte des Neutestamentlichen Kanons*, I, Erlangen, 1888, pp. 516–533; admitted by Harnack (*Chronologie*, I, 674).—[3] Comp. P. Dietze, *Die Briefe des Ignatius und das Johannesevangelium* (*Theol. Studien u. Kritiken*, 78, 1905, pp. 563–603).—[4] Irenæus, 3, 3, 4; comp. 3, 1, 2.—[5] Eusebius, *H. E.*, 5, 24.—[6] Comp. not. 4.—[7] Epiphanius, *Hær.*, 51, 3 *ff.*; comp. Th. Zahn, *Geschichte des Neutest. Kanons*, I, 252–254.

even Justin Martyr was acquainted with it[1]—a fact which ought not to have been doubted. Moreover, this tradition reaches back directly to the time when the Gospel first became known, for the appendix to the fourth Gospel, without which the Gospel was probably never known in the church, expressly names the disciple whom Jesus loved, and thereby it means John,[2] as the author of the Gospel.[3]

Thirdly, a true historical method demands that we should carefully test the correctness of the sketch of the life of Jesus given in the fourth Gospel, apart from the question of its authorship. For, even if the author or authors of the appendix were mistaken in assigning the Gospel to John the apostle, we should still have to examine whether its statements about frequent sojourns of Jesus in Jerusalem might not be based on good traditions.

The latter I leave aside for the present moment, as belonging rather to historical criticism. The manner in which the two other facts have been dealt with in the liberal Jesus-research during the last seventy years has proved as clearly

[1] Comp. not. 2, p. 101.—[2] Admitted even by Jülicher, *Einleitung in das N. T.*, 5th edition, 1906, p. 370.—[3] John 21 : 24.

as possible that liberal Jesus-research by its presuppositions is prevented from being able to recognize unpleasant facts impartially.

Baur placed the fourth Gospel as late as 180. Step by step critics retreated from this untenable position. Even to-day, however, some scholars think that the Gospel was not written before 130 A. D.

And the tradition regarding the author of the Gospel has become a real martyr in the hands of liberal critics. Even the most improbable statements of later writers have been believed by some scholars in order to render this tradition suspicious. A notice of Papias, *e. g.*, certainly not handed down in its correct form, was regarded as evidence proving that John was murdered by the Jews. And thus they fancied they could refute the tradition of John's residence in Asia Minor, closely connected with the tradition about the origin of the Gospel.[1] I do not mean to say that these scholars had no honest desire for truth. It is, on the contrary, this very same desire for truth that must lead them to

[1] Comp. J. H. Bernard, *The Traditions as to the Death of John the son of Zebedee* (*The Irish Church Quarterly*, 1908, pp. 51–66); Th. Zahn, *Einleitung in das N. T.*, II, Leipsic, 1900, p. 467.

impossible assertions about Saint John as long as they assume that the life of Jesus was a purely human one. For they correctly realize that, if John had lived at Ephesus for many years in his old age, the tradition that he was the author of the fourth Gospel could not easily be pushed aside.

Of late the Johannine question has entered a new phase. Up to the present time the unity of the fourth Gospel has been almost an axiom. Since the time of Baur this Gospel has appeared to scholars as the coat of Christ "without seam," which could not be divided. But during the last four years especially, F. Spitta of Strassburg, Edouard Schwartz the excellent philologist of Freiburg, Wellhausen, and Wendt, who held these views for many years (since 1886), have tried to prove that we can discern several sources, or, at least, different layers, in the fourth Gospel.[1] Some

[1] F. Spitta, *Das Johannesevangelium als Quelle der Geschichte Jesu*, Göttingen, 1910; E. Schwartz, *Aporien im vierten Evangelium* (*Nachrichten der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften, philos.-hist. Klasse*, 1907, p. 343 *ff.*, 1908, pp. 115 *ff.*, 149 *ff.*, 497 *ff.*); J. Wellhausen, *Erweiterungen im vierten Evangelium*, Berlin, 1907; *Das Evangelium Johannis*, Berlin, 1908; H. H. Wendt, *Die Schichten im vierten Evangelium*, Göttingen, 1911; W. Bousset, *Ist das vierte Evangelium eine litterarische Einheit?* (*Theologische Rundschau*, Tübingen, 1909, pp. 1–12 and 39–64). Comp. C. R. Gregory,

of the observations made by these scholars are not wholly wrong, to my mind. I think we cannot help recognizing that the first copy of the original author (in my opinion, John the apostle) perhaps suffered alterations and additions from one or more hands before it took the shape in which the Gospel now lies before us, perhaps even before it had reached the stage of a uniform whole.[1] But the form in which these theories are offered cannot be considered as acceptable. Of Spitta's and Wendt's thoughts perhaps it may be said that they, more than the earlier liberal scholars, do more justice to the important, though in many respects puzzling, source which we have in the fourth Gospel. But the statements of Edouard Schwartz and Wellhausen, in my opinion, are but another illustration of the fact that the presupposition of a purely human life of Jesus forces literary criticism to assertions with regard to the sources which can only be regarded as mistakes of learned sagacity.

Wellhausen und Johannes, Leipsic, 1910; Th. Zahn, *Das Evangelium des Johannes unter den Händen seiner neuesten Kritiker, Neue kirchliche Zeitschrift*, XXII, Erlangen, 1911, pp. 28–58, 83–115; A. Juncker, *Zur neuesten Johanneskritik, Vortrag usw.*, Halle, 1912.

[1] A similar view seems to be held by my colleague, Professor Paul Feine (comp. his *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, 2d edition, Leipsic, 1911, p. 515).

Now, after having given some remarks about the Johannine question, I return to the general criticism of the Gospels. If the fourth Gospel is more than a fiction dealing arbitrarily with the synoptic tradition, then it becomes perfectly evident that the synoptic tradition, apart from the sayings of Jesus which are attested by the "collection of sayings," is but one form of the tradition which lived in the Christian community at that time, and liberal Jesus-research appears as not doing justice to the sources when wholly rejecting the fourth Gospel by means of a so-called literary "criticism."

The same objection must be made against the manner in which liberal theology answers the question how much of our tradition about Jesus is to be regarded as credible in its details. This question falls outside the scope of the criticism of the sources. It is already part of historical reconstruction. In its sphere we may now distinguish historical criticism, which tries to ascertain what really happened, and historical description. It remains for me to show that the liberal Jesus-research has proved itself and must prove itself in both to be unable to do full justice to the sources.

I shall first confine myself to the historical criticism. I wish to call attention to two facts: first, that the inability referred to shows itself when the fourth Gospel, too, is taken into consideration; second, that it also appears when the synoptic story only is dealt with.

The narration of John differs from that of the synoptics—apart from the character of the sayings of Jesus—not only in dividing his public activity, as we have seen, between Galilee and Judea, and in extending it, in connection therewith, over two years and a quarter, but also in making a different statement about the last day of Jesus. For, while according to the synoptics Jesus still partook of the Passover meal with his disciples on Thursday evening,[1] so that this Thursday was the 14th of the Jewish month Nisan, the very day of the Passover, and Jesus died on the 15th, the story of John makes it perfectly clear that the last meal of Jesus with his disciples on the Thursday evening could not have been the Passover. For he tells us[2] that the Jewish accusers of Jesus on the next day

[1] Comp. Mark 14 : 12–16; Matt. 26 : 17–19; Luke 22 : 7–15.
[2] John 18 : 28.

went not into the judgment hall (of Pilate), *lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover.* Thus, according to the fourth Gospel, Jesus died on the 14th of Nisan.

There is also a difference expressly emphasized in the fourth Gospel with regard to the beginning of Jesus' public activity. According to Mark and Matthew Jesus went to Galilee in order to begin his public activity *after that John the Baptist was put in prison.*[1] John, however, states expressly with regard to the first activity of Jesus: *John was not yet cast into prison.*[2]

The latter notice, which is generally recognized as an intentional correction of the statement in Mark and Matthew, cannot possibly be understood as being a piece of fiction with a distinct tendency. We have here, therefore, a tradition or a personal reminiscence, of whose correctness, in spite of its opposition to Mark and Matthew, the author of the fourth Gospel was convinced. Unbiassed research ought to give preference to this statement above that of Mark, because it is given with such confidence and because it is supported by the fact that Luke

[1] Mark 1 : 14; Matt. 4 : 12.—[2] John 3 : 24.

has not taken over the notice of Mark. But the advocates of a purely human life of Jesus may not assume the fourth evangelist capable of having more accurate knowledge in any respect than Mark, although, as we have seen, nothing supports the belief that Mark had a more independent acquaintance with the life of Jesus.

Regarding the differences about the day on which Jesus died, we are in a similar position. Only lately Heitmüller admitted that the synoptic narrative is very improbable.[1] We cannot imagine all the trouble taking place on the very day of the Passover. Simon of Cyrene, too, is coming from the field at the time when Jesus is led to Golgotha.[2] Was this possible on the day of the Passover?

But sooner than give preference in such an important matter to the fourth Gospel, which is otherwise not recognized as a source, liberal scholars make every possible, and even impossible, effort. Declaring, as the Tübingen school already had done, that the death of Jesus, in the fourth Gospel, was laid on the 14th of Nisan,

[1] Artikel "Jesus Christus," *Handwörterbuch*, III, 369.
[2] Mark 14 : 21.

in order that Jesus might appear as the true Passover lamb, and admitting that the account of the synoptic Gospels is even less credible, Heitmüller says[1] we have to abandon all hope of fixing the exact date, and to be satisfied with knowing that Jesus was crucified shortly before the feast. Thus, these critics follow neither of the accounts that have come down to us. They know better than both of them! And all this to escape the necessity of agreeing with the fourth Gospel! This may be rendered inevitable by the presuppositions of scholars who acknowledge only a purely human life of Jesus, but I cannot consider it the correct method.

The situation is practically the same in the case of the more important differences with regard to the scene of Jesus' public activity. A word of Jesus in the "collection of sayings"—*Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not*[2]—speaks volumes in favor of John's statement. And what the synoptic Gospels tell us of Jesus' doings and sayings in Jerusalem hardly

[1] L. c., p. 370.—[2] Matt. 23 : 37; Luke 13 : 24.

fits into the frame of the few days during which Jesus, according to them, dwelt in Jerusalem; nay, much that they relate brings us to the conclusion that Jesus was better known in Jerusalem than he could have been according to the synoptic story.[1] Nevertheless, the scholars who acknowledge only a purely human life of Jesus are forced by their anti-Johannine interest to abide by the framework of Mark. When they come to the appearances of the risen Lord this is still more necessary, although Luke, too, reports appearances only in Jerusalem. Their presuppositions make impartial historical criticism of the fourth Gospel impossible.

But even as regards the synoptics, the condition is the same.

I do not wish to spend any time on the miracles related by the synoptics. For here many liberal scholars try to retain as much as possible by means of rationalistic interpretations. We have to attend principally to the treatment of the synoptic speeches of Jesus.

Only one other point may first be mentioned. All the synoptic Gospels presuppose

[1] Comp. Mark 14 : 14, 29, 43; Luke 23 : 27.

that the twelve disciples were still in Jerusalem on Easter morning. According to Luke, they do not leave Jerusalem at all till Pentecost.[1] According to Mark and Matthew the women are bidden at the grave of Jesus to go to see them and send them to Galilee.[2] In spite of this, the liberal Jesus-research knows that the disciples fled to Galilee immediately after the capture of Jesus. Not a single source says so. But liberal Jesus-research must so assume in order that the disciples may be far from the grave on the third day. Judging by what I understand of historical method, such criticism is historically unjustifiable because it violates the sources instead of doing justice to them.

We meet with the same kind of criticism in the treatment of the words of Jesus reported by the synoptic Gospels. All these words are handed down by people who believed in Christ —that is also the case with the "collection of sayings." We may admit, therefore, quite generally that they may have been altered by the views of the community. Moreover, in a few cases this fact cannot be in the least denied.

[1] Luke 24 : 49.—[2] Mark 16 : 7; Matt. 28 : 7.

Thus, to give one example, no sensible man will deny that, by the side of the feeding of the five thousand (Mark 6:35 *ff.*), the feeding of the four thousand (Mark 8:1 *ff.*) represents a doublet of tradition. Luke already felt this; he omitted the second story of Mark. But if the second story is unhistoric, then the words of Jesus (Mark 8:19*f.*) *When I brake the five loaves among the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces took ye up? And when the seven among the four thousand, how many basketfuls of broken pieces took ye up?* cannot possibly be anything else than a fiction of the evangelist or of the tradition he followed. Consequently, it is evident that, among the sayings that are handed down to us as words of Jesus, there are at least several which are erroneously ascribed to Jesus in the Gospels, as they originated in the thoughts of the later community. But which of the biblical words of Jesus are reliable, which not? Wellhausen is highly suspicious even as regards the sayings of the "collection" and the parables. The tradition about the deeds, he says, is more reliable; the words were altered by the views of the community. Schweitzer, on the other hand,

manœuvres with the eschatologically colored words of Jesus in Mark and Matthew as if he had accurately dated short-hand reports at his disposal. On the one hand, the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15 is regarded undoubtedly as one of the most genuine, because it knows nothing of a mediatorial office of Jesus. Wellhausen, on the other hand, is exceedingly skeptical in the case of the speeches of Jesus reported only by Luke. The Gospel of Luke has, as he says somewhat indelicately, a marked partiality for outcast people.[1] Is this method of judging by individual taste historically permissible? The answer is given by the question itself.

Critics have tried to introduce rules for picking out the genuine words. As basis, says Heitmüller,[2] we have to take all the materials that are not in accordance with the belief, theology, worship, and customs of the ancient Christian community or, at any rate, do not completely

[1] J. Wellhausen, *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien*, p. 69: "*Lukas hat eine ausgesprochene Vorliebe nicht bloss für die gedrückten, verkommenen und missleiteten ὄχλοι, sondern für verworfene Individuen; er treibt Wucher mit dem Spruch: die Gesunden bedürfen des Arztes nicht, sondern die Kranken.*" In his *Das Evangelium Lucae*, Berlin, 1904, however, he deals with the parable of the prodigal son (pp. 81–85) without uttering direct doubts about its authenticity.—[2] L. c., p. 361.

agree with it. We may absolutely trust all this and everything that is organically united therewith. On the other hand, we must pass the verdict "not genuine" wherever a story or a word agrees too obviously with the thoughts and customs and the dogmatic and eschatological wants of the later community. This sounds very circumspect, and certainly contains correct ideas. A word of Jesus like that in the "collection of sayings," *The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners*,[1] would be incomprehensible as a fiction of the community. The accurate prophecies of his resurrection, on the contrary, which the synoptics—but not John—ascribe to Jesus[2] were probably first formulated in the community. Yet we cannot make use of this canon as a general rule. For, in the first place, if we consider with how much freedom tradition treated the words of Jesus (as we can see on many occasions), we shall not at all expect a word of Jesus in the Gospels which does not agree with

[1] Matt. 11 : 19 = Luke 7 : 34.

[2] Mark 8 : 31 = Matt. 16 : 21 = Luke 9 : 22; Mark 9 : 31 = Matt. 17 : 23 (omitted, Luke 9 : 44).

the belief of the reporter. If we interpret any word in this way we have to fear that we misinterpret it. And, secondly, it would be contrary to all sound logic if we suspected those words of Jesus which agree most obviously with the belief of the ancient Christians simply for this reason. For there was no greater authority for these Christians than Jesus. We are also in practice brought to evident absurdities if we apply this rule. Just one example of the two possibilities: one of the most genuine words of Jesus, according to liberal Jesus-research, is the prayer in Gethsemane: *Father, take away this cup from me! Nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt.*[1] For people say it does not agree with the belief of later days that Jesus sacrificed himself voluntarily. But from whom could the disciples have heard of this prayer? Jesus went forward a little from them and they fell asleep.[2] And liberal critics do not know of any narratives the risen Lord told his disciples. If somebody were to consider this prayer in Gethsemane as a later fiction, that would be quite conceivable from a methodic point of view.

[1] Mark 14 : 36 = Matt. 26 : 39; Luke 22 : 42.—[2] Mark 14 : 35, 37.

And, on the other hand, what agrees more with the belief of later days than the conviction that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, and that the end of the world was impending! Ought not, therefore, if the aforenamed rule is admitted to be right, all the sayings of Jesus that testify to his Messiahship, and all eschatological speeches, to be regarded with suspicion?

This conclusion really has been drawn; other liberal scholars start from this very point, as we saw in the last lecture. Scholars who acknowledge only a purely human life of Jesus do not rise above arbitrary results because they cannot make any use of the Jesus of the Gospels and do not have, all in all, another standard for eliminating what they consider not genuine, than their individual taste.

This, naturally, influences the whole description, the whole conception of Jesus, to which we have thus come without noticing it. Scholars who acknowledge only a purely human life of Jesus stand here between a Scylla and a Charybdis. If they resolutely eliminate what they cannot assimilate, the whole tradition becomes suspected, and, as we saw in the case of Wrede

and Wellhausen, they do not retain enough material for a total conception of Jesus, not to say for a description of his life. If, on the other hand, they trust these traditions, they have to take much into account that does not agree with a purely human self-consciousness in Jesus. Then let them try, as some have done, to lay stress on the eschatological thoughts of Jesus in order to find the frame for the words and deeds, which surpass human measure, in a high-flown Messianic consciousness of majesty far exceeding actual reality. Nevertheless, they do not find a satisfactory solution of the Jesus-problem. For a self-consciousness of this kind will have an abnormal look about it. The next step, to assume psychic abnormality in Jesus, is then an easy one.

Thus, the Jesus-research, acknowledging but a purely human life of Jesus, comes to the conclusion either: We know next to nothing about Jesus, or: Jesus was a religious enthusiast.

The former of these two positions is not in harmony with our most definite knowledge, viz., that there was a growing community shortly after the death of Jesus which highly revered

Jesus, and which must, therefore, have had a lively interest in his words and deeds. The latter does not agree with the impression which the deepest and, therefore, the genuine words of Jesus make upon us.

But if neither of these two views, which are the only consistent ones, is tenable, then the error must lie in the assumption that Jesus of Nazareth can be understood from a purely historical point of view or—which is the same thing—that his life was a purely human one.

That the error is really to be found there, because that presupposition is untenable, I shall try to show in the next lecture.

IV

JESUS NOT A MERE MAN

IN my last lecture I tried to show that the liberal Jesus-research, resting on the assumption necessary for historical science, that the life of Jesus was a purely human one, cannot prevail before the tribunal of historical science itself, because it does not do justice to the sources and is not tenable in itself. It is bound either to come to such a skeptical attitude toward the sources that it is forced to give up all hope of obtaining a picture of the person and the activity of Christ—and that is not in harmony with our most definite knowledge, viz., that there existed a community shortly after the death of Jesus which revered him very highly and must have taken a lively interest in his words and deeds. Or, if it puts more confidence in the sources, Jesus and his deeds and his experiences must seem to exceed the ordinary human measure so far that the only possible frame for

his self-consciousness might be found in a highly exaggerated Messianic consciousness of majesty, which no longer agrees with normal human life. Then Jesus appears as a religious enthusiast, and it seems natural to ask whether he was psychically sound. But such a view does not agree with the deepest and greatest, and therefore certainly most genuine, words of Jesus which we have in the Gospels.

Now, if neither of these attitudes toward the problem, which the tradition about Jesus sets us, although they are by themselves historically possible and consistent, is tenable, then the assumption must be wrong that historical science can solve the problem of the person and life of Jesus, and the presupposition necessary for historical science, that the life of Jesus was a purely human one, must be untenable. That this is the case I shall to-day try to prove.

Here again I wish to make some introductory remarks. I once had a private conversation about Jesus-research with my honored teacher and friend, Adolf Harnack, and when I expressed similar views to those at the end of my third lecture, which I have reproduced to-day, Harnack

said to me in his witty manner, "That is gathering apologetic figs of skeptical thistles." That is not my intention. Some conservative theologians, it is true, decline scientific historical research about Jesus for no other reason than because they wish, after rejecting historical criticism, to stick to the whole tradition about Jesus as something certain for the believer. This is—in most cases not subjectively, but still objectively—insincere. It is true that belief has its place where history has to abandon all hope of mastering the biblical tradition with the assumptions and means at its disposal. Just as science and religion do not exclude one another, because the sphere of religion is different from that of science and perfectly inaccessible to science. Nevertheless, we must concede that faith cannot accept anything that does in no way agree with natural science—I mean science that is conscious of its due bounds. Even the most earnest believer would not, for instance, because he is in a great hurry, pray to God to make the day six hours longer. In the same manner, nobody is entitled to think that anything could or should be considered to be true by faith that historical sci-

ence through the means at its disposal is forced to recognize as unhistorical. And we have such material that is unhistorical in this sense in the biblical tradition. I shall give three examples.

The sentence of the so-called apostolic creed, *born of the Virgin Mary*, is based only on Matthew 1 and Luke 1.[1] The other New Testament writings know nothing of a virgin birth. Moreover, there are not a few passages which speak openly of Jesus' parents[2] or of his descent from the seed of David.[3] Even in the Gospel of John Jesus twice is called *the son of Joseph*,[4] once by the murmuring Jews, once by one of the first disciples. Add to this, that criticism of the sources shows Matthew 1 and Luke 1 to be later strata of the evangelical tradition. Under these circumstances I think it is the duty of truthfulness to state openly that the virgin birth, perhaps, or even probably, arose out of fabulous tradition.

This is also the case with the story of Christ's ascension *forty days* after his resurrection. It is related only in Acts 1.[5] None of the Gospels mentions an ascension of this kind. John and

[1] Matt. 1 : 18–20; Luke 1 : 34, 35.—[2] *E. g.*, Matt. 13 : 55; Luke 2 : 27, 41, 43, comp. 2 : 33, 48.—[3] Matt. 1 : 1; John 7 : 42; Rom. 1 : 3; II Tim. 2 : 8.—[4] John 1 : 46; 6 : 42.—[5] Acts 1 : 3.

Paul seem to place the ascension immediately after the resurrection;[1] and as late as about 130 A. D. a non-biblical Christian document, the so-called letter of Barnabas, says: *We celebrate the eighth day* (the Sunday) *in great joy, for on that day Jesus rose from the dead and ascended into heaven after revealing himself.*[2] The ascension just forty days after Easter is but a legend.

And, to come to the third example, it is also undoubtedly true that the reports of the appearances of the risen Lord—in Luke and the Acts;[3] I only mention the meals of the risen Jesus—have even within the New Testament become more massive and rough than is in keeping with the oldest view about the resurrection of Jesus.[4]

I know that such statements are even to-day considered as offsprings of infidelity by many Christians. But nevertheless the words of Paul remain true: *We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.*[5] It is, therefore, in my opinion, the duty of all honest friends of the truth among the leading Christians to accustom their congregations to the thought that not the whole

[1] John 20 : 17; Rom. 10 : 6, 7; Eph. 4 : 8–10.—[2] Ep. Barnab. 15 : 9.—[3] Luke 24 : 43; Acts 10 : 41.—[4] I Cor. 15 : 5–8; Gal. 1 : 16.—[5] II Cor. 13 : 8.

biblical tradition about Jesus is undoubtedly historical. More than a century ago a good German Christian, an opponent of rationalism, Matthias Claudius, who is highly esteemed in Christian spheres up to the present day, said, referring to the biblical reports of Jesus: *Indeed, all that the Bible tells of him, all the fine legends and fine stories, are not to be mistaken for him* (the Lord himself), *they are but witnesses of him, only bells on his coat—but nevertheless the best treasure we have on earth.*[1] If even the honorable Claudius, in whose time Bible criticism lay still in its cradle, could openly speak of *legends* that are told about Jesus in the Bible, it is, indeed, the duty of us, children of a more advanced century, not to mistake the bells for the person but to educate our youth and our grown-up fellow-Christians, in this respect too, in that freedom which becomes our faith.

This is never to be forgotten whenever we deal with the miracles told in the Gospels. That

[1] *Werke, vierter Teil, Briefe an Andres, erster Brief* (*Werke*, II, 4th edition, Cannstadt, 1835, p. 111): "*Was in der Bibel von ihm steht, all die herrlichen Sagen und herrlichen Geschichten, sind freilich nicht er, sondern nur Zeugnisse von ihm, nur Glöcklein am Leibrock; aber doch das Beste, was wir auf Erden haben.*"

Jesus healed many sick people in a manner which seemed marvellous to his contemporaries and which would, perhaps, remain unintelligible for our century too, is a fact which even the liberal Jesus-research recognizes. And Christians who have a greater opinion of Jesus will believe him capable of greater things. But nobody who is acquainted with historical research can deny that we can even within our Gospels discover a dash of exaggeration of the marvellous which later on led to the fictions of the apocryphal Gospels. Tradition always exaggerates, as I showed by an illustration from modern history in the last lecture.[1] About some miracles told in the Gospels we may assert with a certain amount of assurance that tradition reported here what never happened in this manner. I mention only the story of the many bodies of the saints which arose and came out of the graves when the earth did quake at the moment of Christ's death, and the other that the veil of the temple was rent in the same moment.[2] And these examples, which hardly any one will find fault with, are not the only ones. I consider it my duty to say this too,

[1] Above, p. 92.—[2] Matt. 27 : 51–53.

that, in spite of my position with regard to the Gospel of John, some of the miracles told in that Gospel[1] call up grave doubts within me. Exaggerations, insufficient acquaintance with the so-called natural laws, and wrong interpretation of metaphoric language undoubtedly helped to form our tradition. But we cannot clearly mark off the share they had in it and separate what is credible from what is incredible. Nor is this necessary. The tradition about Christ can be an invaluable treasure for us, even if, like Claudius, we recognize fine stories and fine legends in it.

And not only in these particulars I mentioned has faith to learn to take into account what historical research can ascertain without infringing on strange territory; faith has to make even a greater concession to the historical conception of Jesus: faith, too, must start from the fact that Jesus was a real man. As a man he spent his life among men; as a man he was regarded by his first disciples when they came to him; as a man he died. Even in the Gospel of John Jesus is spoken of as calling himself plainly a man: *Ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you*

[1] Comp. John 2 : 9; 11 : 39; 20 : 27.

the truth,[1] and Paul contrasted the *one man by whom sin entered into the world* with the *one man Jesus Christ by whom the grace of God did abound to many*.[2] And this concession that Jesus was a man means more than that he had a human body and a human soul, with which many people rest satisfied. To be a man, Harnack rightly says,[3] also with regard to Jesus, is, firstly, to possess such and such a definite and, therefore, limited and restricted mental disposition; and, secondly, to be placed with this mental disposition in a likewise limited historical connection. Every one who knows his Bible must admit that Jesus was a man of flesh and blood also in this sense of the word. He not only spoke the language of his countrymen; he not only shared their conception of the universe; but he is also in many other respects influenced by the culture of his world, by the views into which it drew him.

But, in spite of all this, the assumption that the life of Jesus was a purely human one, and that we can appreciate his personality as a

[1] John 8 : 40.—[2] Romans 5 : 12 *ff.*—[3] *Das Wesen des Christentums*, 1st edition, Leipsic, 1900, p. 8.

purely human one, is false. I have thus reached the subject of the present lecture. I shall try to prove my statement in a threefold way: from the words of Jesus himself, from the belief of his first disciples, and from the belief of the centuries after him.

If, therefore, I begin with Jesus' own words, I must first remind you of something I said in the preceding lecture. All the words of Jesus lie before us, as we have seen, in the form in which they were handed down to us by the community which believed in him. We can, therefore, in no single case disprove the assertion that the belief of the later community altered the words of Jesus. Hence, it is impossible to prove by any single saying of Jesus that his own words bear evidence that his life was not purely human. Only the general impression of the words of Jesus can be used.

Perhaps this skeptical attitude will surprise you. Then, permit me first to convince you of its necessity by a famous and particularly instructive example.

We should expect that if one of the sayings of Jesus were preserved authentically word for

word, this would be the case with the words instituting the Lord's supper. For, without the slightest doubt, the oldest community in Jerusalem already celebrated, as Acts relates, the Lord's supper. That the Pauline congregations did so is known quite definitely.[1] And Paul assumes that this meal unites all Christians to one body.[2] This celebration of the Lord's supper, one would expect, would have kept the words with which Jesus instituted this supper alive in the church from the first beginnings of Christianity. In addition to this, we have a report about the institution of the Lord's supper not only by the synoptic Gospels, but also by Paul. And Paul says distinctly: *I received of the Lord*—certainly not directly, but by information from those who were eye-witnesses of the events of his last night—*that which also I delivered unto you.*[3] Then he declares: *The Lord Jesus, the night on which he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it and said: Take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you, this do in remembrance of me. In like manner also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new*

[1] I Cor. 11 : 20 *ff.*—[2] I Cor. 10 : 17.—[3] I Cor. 11 : 23.

covenant in my blood; this do, as oft as ye drink, in remembrance of me.[1] But none the less we are not in a position to ascertain with undoubted historical accuracy what Jesus said. Mark, whom the first Gospel follows pretty closely, Luke, and Paul give us three reports that differ on very essential points.[2] In the text of Luke we cannot even reconstruct its exact wording with certainty. The manuscripts differ too much. Perhaps the text of Luke originally read as follows: *And he said unto them: With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I say unto you, I will not any more eat it, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he received a cup, and when he had given thanks, he said: Take this and divide it among yourselves. For I say unto you, I will not drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it and gave to them, saying: This is my body.*[3] In our printed texts there is still

[1] I Cor. 11 : 24, 25.—[2] Comp. the *Preisverteilungsprogramm der Universität Halle* for 1894, written by my deceased colleague and friend Erich Haupt († February 19, 1910): *Ueber die ursprüngliche Form und Bedeutung der Abendmahlsworte*, Halle, 1894.—[3] Luke 22 : 15–19a.

added:[1] *Which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me. And the cup in like manner after supper, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, even that which is poured out for you.* But as some important manuscripts omit these words, which are almost identical with those of Paul, we cannot absolutely refute the statement that these words are an addition taken over from I Corinthians. It is, therefore, possible to reconcile the last supper of Jesus with the assumption that his life was a purely human one. But in order to explain this, I shall have to introduce the report of Mark and Matthew also. It reads:[2] *As they were eating he took bread, and when he had blessed, he brake it and gave to them and said: Take ye; this is my body. And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave to them, and they all drank of it. And he said unto them: This is my blood of the covenant, which is shed for many* (Matthew adds: *for the remission of sins*). *Verily I say unto you, I will no more drink of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.* Here,[3]

[1] Luke 22 : 19b, 20.—[2] Mark 14 : 22–25; Matt. 26 : 26–29.—[3] Mark 14 : 25 = Matt. 26 : 29.

just as in Luke,[1] we find the remark, which does not agree with our views of the last supper and which is missing in the report of Paul: that this drinking of Jesus with his disciples here takes place for the last time, but that it will be repeated in the Messianic kingdom. Here the attempts to bring the tradition of the first Lord's supper into consonance with a purely human life of Jesus have a starting-point.[2] The critics say that Mark, Matthew, and the original text of Luke do not draw any parallel between the bread and the body of Jesus as given to death. This parallel, they say, is a later tradition, like the characterization of the wine as the blood of the new covenant, not yet found in Luke. The new meaning given to the words of Jesus by these additions is, in their opinion, still more developed by Paul. But originally, they say, the last supper of Jesus was but a farewell meal and a joyful anticipation of the fellowship in the Messianic kingdom; and when Jesus called the

[1] Luke 22 : 16.

[2] Comp. E. Grafe, *Die neuesten Forschungen über die urchristliche Abendmahlsfeier* (*Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, V. Tübingen, 1895, pp. 101–138) and W. Heitmüller, Article "Abendmahl im Neuen Testament," in *Die Religion usw., Handwörterbuch herausgeg. von F. M. Schiele*, I, Tübingen, 1909, pp. 20–52.

bread his body he merely referred to this fellowship.

It can be shown without much difficulty that this interpretation hardly does justice to the sources. In the synoptic account two events are interwoven—as we see very clearly in Luke, especially if we take the text as it reads in most manuscripts— and these are the last Passover and the institution of the Lord's supper. To the former belongs the word about the repetition or, as it is called in Luke, the *fulfilment* of this table fellowship in the kingdom of God. Now, the fact that the last meal of Jesus with his disciples was no Passover, as we saw in the preceding lecture,[1] is not favorable to the genuineness of this word. But even if it is genuine and in any way referred to the future fellowship in the kingdom of God, which Jesus often likens to a great supper, even then they are irrelevant for our conception of the Lord's supper, since they have nothing to do with it but rather belong to the preceding last meal of Jesus with his disciples. With regard to the last supper, purely historical criticism may prove it to be probable that the idea

[1] Above, p. 107 *ff.*

of the New Covenant, as offered by Mark, Matthew, and Paul, and the larger but probably nevertheless genuine text of Luke, elucidates its meaning. Of Moses the book of Exodus[1] tells us that, when the Sinai covenant was made, he *sacrificed peace-offerings of oxen unto the Lord, and took half of the blood and sprinkled it on the altar; the other half he sprinkled on the people, saying: Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord has made with you.* And in the book of Jeremiah[2] is found the prophecy: *Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant, with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt . . . , but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days*, etc. And, among the gifts of this covenant, the last and most decisive one mentioned is: *They shall all know me . . . , for I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more.* These two passages Jesus evidently had in mind when in that night he thought of his death. Metaphorically, he calls it the

[1] Exodus 24 : 5, 6, 8.—[2] Jer. 31 : 31 *ff.*

sacrifice of the New Covenant; and—even if the words found only in Matthew, viz., *for the remission of sins*, cannot be accepted as genuine—nevertheless, according to their purport, they are at home in the context, as the obvious reference to the prophecy of Jeremiah proves.

It is very natural that the liberal Jesus-research of our day should shun this interpretation of the Lord's supper. For, if Jesus considered his death the sacrifice of the New Covenant, he has thereby assigned to himself such a central position within the history of God's people that this is not compatible with an ordinary human self-consciousness. I am convinced that obscuring the fact that Jesus thought so when he instituted the Lord's supper is violating the sources. But I repeat, historically this interpretation cannot be proved convincingly. Moreover, since the assumption that the life of Jesus was a purely human one is in a certain manner necessary for scientific historical research, as we saw, no one need be surprised that liberal scholars try by all possible means to avoid this interpretation. Perhaps we shall all agree that it would be more correct for historical scholars to admit that

Jesus considered his death as the sacrifice of the New Covenant, and then to declare that this Jesus who had such views—if he is not to be taken for a religious enthusiast—cannot be measured by any of the standards of historical science. Nevertheless, when considering the liberal interpretation, we shall bear in mind, as emphasized above, that we cannot prove by any single saying of Jesus that his self-consciousness surpassed human measure.

But you may say it is not so strange as it seems at first that the disciples did not remember accurately the words Jesus spoke when instituting the Lord's supper. For the events of the following night and the next day were exciting enough to obscure the recollections of the previous evening. That is quite right. Surely, in the case of other sayings of Jesus, *e. g.*, in the case of the parables which easily impressed themselves on the mind, and in the case of such words as could be easily remembered on account of their form, tradition was really in a more favorable position. Nevertheless, I adhere to my statement that we are not so sure of the exact wording of any one of the sayings of Jesus that we could crush all opposition with any single word ascribed to him.

But what the single words cannot achieve, that is achieved by their whole, even apart from the Gospel of John.

Our most reliable sources for the words of Jesus are the "collection of sayings" and the Gospel of Mark and some material peculiar to Luke. I shall quote from these sources some passages that are of importance in this connection, but for the present I shall ignore the Messianic consciousness of Jesus in order to discuss it afterwards.

A self-consciousness surpassing human measure is already to be seen in the words of Jesus which are handed down to the first and third evangelists by the "collection of sayings."[1] *All prophets and the law prophesied until John*, Jesus says here.[2] With him (that is the meaning) begins a new period. He calls his disciples blessed for having lived to see this time: *Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men desired to see the things which ye see and saw them not, and to hear the things*

[1] Comp. A. Harnack, *Sprüche und Reden Jesu. Die zweite Quelle des Matthaeus und Lukas*, Leipsic, 1907. The numbers given in the following notes are those of the texts printed in this book, pp. 88–102.—[2] Matt. 11 : 3; Harnack, No. 50.

which ye hear and heard them not.[1] He says outright: *Behold a greater than Jonah is here* and *a greater than Solomon is here.*[2] He knows that through his activity Capernaum *is exalted unto heaven.*[3] He sends answer to John the Baptist: *Blessed is he whosoever shall find none occasion of stumbling in me.*[4] Concerning John he even says to the multitudes: *This is he of whom it is written, Behold I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee.*[5] With majestic authority he opposes his *I say unto you* to the commandments of the Old Testament.[6] He expects the people to believe in him, for he is glad that in the centurion of Capernaum he found *so great a faith as he had not found in Israel,*[7] and he knows that the position taken up toward him is decisive for all eternity: *Whosoever shall deny me before men,* he says, *him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.*[8] Hence the enormity of the stupendous demand: *He that loveth father or mother more than me is*

[1] Matt. 13 : 16 *f.;* Harnack, No. 26.—[2] Matt. 12 : 41 *f.;* Harnack, No. 38.—[3] Matt. 11 : 23; Harnack, No. 23.—[4] Matt. 11 : 6; Harnack, No. 14.—[5] Matt. 11 : 10; Harnack, No. 14.—[6] Matt. 5 : 44; Harnack, No. 6; and Matt. 5 : 32; Harnack, No. 52.—[7] Matt. 8 : 10; Harnack, No. 13.—[8] Matt. 10 : 33; Harnack, No. 34a.

not worthy of me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.[1]

Exactly the same thoughts are found in Mark in a different form. Here, too, Jesus knows that John the Baptist belongs to an older order, while the new one begins with himself: *No man seweth a piece of undressed cloth on an old garment, nor putteth new wine into old wine-skins*, Jesus says, when he is asked why his disciples do not fast as do the disciples of John.[2] Here, too, his disciples are blessed because they have him; he likens them to *the children of the bride-chamber in the time when the bridegroom is with them.*[3] He is conscious of acting by an authority of which the Pharisees have no idea.[4] He says, he has *power on earth to forgive sins.*[5] He calls himself metaphorically the stronger man who has bound the strong man, *i. e.*, gained the victory over Satan.[6] He even employs the climax: *No one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son.*[7] And yet he says that he did not come *to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*[8] Here, too, he demands

[1] Matt. 10 : 37; Harnack No. 45.—[2] Mark 2 : 21.—[3] 2 : 19.—[4] 11 : 33.—[5] 2 : 10.—[6] 3 : 27.—[7] 13 : 32.—[8] 10 : 45.

faith: *Thy faith hath made thee whole*, he says to the woman who had an issue of blood twelve years.[1] Here, too, he expects that people will make the greatest sacrifices for his sake, *leave house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, even lose their lives* for his sake.[2] Here, too, his words are weighty for eternity: *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.*[3]

From the tradition peculiar to Luke I shall add only one word, the word from the cross which testifies how far Jesus was from any consciousness of guilt: *Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.*[4]

Are these sayings still in harmony with a purely human self-consciousness?

Here we have to revert to the Messiahship of Jesus. Can we, as Schweitzer suggests, account for the dignity revealed in the words of Jesus I quoted by pointing out that he considered himself the Messiah? I do not in the least deny that he so considered himself. As early as in the "col-

[1] Mark 5 : 34.—[2] 10 : 29.—[3] 8 : 35.—[4] Luke 23 : 24. I would have quoted also Luke 9 : 35: *Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of;* but these words probably are not genuine.

lection of sayings" this is shown by the answer he gave the disciples of John.[1] And in Mark he did not lay claim to the title of Messiah for the first time by his entry into Jerusalem; in the very beginning of the Gospel Jesus explains his *power to forgive sins* by pointing out that he is *the Son of man, i. e.*, the Messiah.[2] Nor may this claim to the title of Messiah be considered as a somewhat natural tendency to comply with the views of the time. Messiahship was not a title with which an earnest man could trifle. For the Messiah was, for the Jews of that time, the fulfiller of God's final intentions with the human world, the one toward whom all prophets had pointed. By Jesus, too, according to some words of his in the "collection of sayings," even the final judgment is closely connected with the ultimate heavenly coming of the Messiah. We shall, therefore, not venture to think out what it means that Jesus considered himself the Messiah.

Nevertheless, in Jesus' own words Messiahship does not appear as the real basis of his self-consciousness. For his Messianic consciousness

[1] Matt. 11 : 4–11; Harnack, No. 14.—[2] Mark 2 : 10.

is, in our oldest source, the "collection of sayings," seen to be free from all the fantastic-majestic traits which Schweitzer ascribes to it. Our sources account for his dignity with another fact. A well-known utterance of Jesus in the "collection of sayings" suggests a basis of his self-consciousness which certainly is not opposed to his Messianic consciousness, but still is independent of it; he knows that his relation to God as his father is unique: *All things*, he says,[1] *have been delivered unto me of my Father; and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father, neither does any know the Father, save the Son and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.* Even if we could recognize a simpler form of these words behind the text as it now reads—as Harnack contends,[2] but without convincing arguments—this simpler form would still give evidence that Jesus was conscious of a unique relation to God. This very fact becomes evident also when in all the Gospels Jesus speaking to the disciples frequently calls God *your Father* and *my Father*, but never *our Father*. For the Lord's prayer is not

[1] Matt. 11 : 27; Harnack, No. 25.—[2] A. Harnack, *Sprüche und Reden Jesu*, Leipsic, 1907, Excurs I, pp. 189–211.

a prayer which he prayed himself, but a prayer which he taught his disciples.[1]

These quotations may suffice. I have made no use here of the Gospel of John, because in this Gospel the words of Jesus certainly are tinged by the thoughts of the evangelist. And also, concerning the words I have quoted, I repeat: we have no guarantee that any one of them was spoken by Jesus in exactly this form. The one circumstance that Jesus spoke Aramaic while his words are preserved in Greek shows clearly that the words of Jesus may have been modified by the belief of his community without their being aware of the fact. But against these words, taken as a whole, the objection that these words may have been altered is of no avail. For we find them essentially on the same level in all the sources. The assumption that the faith of the later Christians first created all these words or raised them to their present level by modifying them, is surely very difficult even from a historical point of view. For from nothing nothing comes. And only on the supposition that the Christians had extraordinary

[1] Comp. Matt. 6 : 9; Luke 11 : 1, 2.

views about Jesus from the very outset, can historians understand that even the oldest Christian community was convinced that Jesus did not remain among the dead, but was raised by God and exalted to the *right hand of the majesty on high*.[1] Still more so does this apply to theological observations. But before we turn to these we must first take a glance at the belief of the primitive Christian community.

Where shall we find it? Bearing the name of an apostle, the two epistles of Peter, the writings of John, and the Pauline epistles, are handed down to us. The second epistle of Peter is, in my opinion, certainly spurious and probably the latest part of the New Testament. I Peter is much older, but many people are of the opinion that it was not written by Peter, and to my mind this is at least not improbable. The Johannine writings are ascribed to the apostle John by very few liberal theologians; they can, therefore, not supply convincing arguments. Thus, only the Pauline epistles remain as evidences.

But attempts have been made to minimize

[1] Acts 2 : 32 *f.*; Heb. 1 : 3.

the importance of their evidence, too.[1] We are told that Paul shows his own individual belief, not that of the oldest Christian community. These critics admit that Paul did not place Jesus on a level with other men, but they state that this individual faith of the apostle had its individual causes. Paul, they say, had no vivid impression of the historical Jesus at all; he saw Jesus only in the glare of light he observed on the road to Damascus. There is some truth in this statement. The faith of Paul has an individual tone; his ideas about Christ cannot be taken for common property of the apostolic age. It is likewise true that the vision on the road to Damascus was of decisive importance for Paul's relation to Jesus. But this does not yet settle the matter. For, in the first place, we can gather much valuable information about the faith of the oldest Christian community from the letters

[1] Comp. C. Holsten, *Zum Evangelium des Paulus und Petrus*, Rostock, 1868, pp. 65–114 (*Die Christusvision des Apostels Paulus und die Genesis des paulinischen Evangeliums*); H. J. Holtzmann, *Lehrbuch der Neutestamentlichen Theologie*, Freiburg and Leipsic, 1897, II, 56–97; W. Wrede, *Paulus*, Halle, 1905; A. Jülicher, *Paulus und Jesus*, Tübingen, 1907; J. Weiss, *Paulus und Jesus*, Berlin, 1909; P. Feine, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, 2d edition, Leipsic, 1911, p. 284 *ff.*

of Paul, and, secondly, the individual thoughts of the apostle are not satisfactorily accounted for by the vision of Damascus.

Both these assertions will need to be treated more fully.

Paul frequently came into contact with the Jerusalem community. Three years after his conversion, a few years after the death of Jesus, he visited Peter in Jerusalem and also spoke with James, the brother of Jesus.[1] At least three times he returned to Jerusalem in later days,[2] so that he must have known very accurately what Peter, John, and James thought about Jesus. And, on the other hand, he came into touch, in Antioch and other places, with Christians who came from Palestine or had intercourse with Christians there. The faith of the whole primitive community cannot have been unknown to him. Hence, if Paul assumes that all Christians see in Jesus the risen Lord exalted to the right hand of God, who will come again for the great judgment, we cannot in the least doubt—nor is

[1] Gal. 1 : 18 *f.*

[2] *A*: Gal. 2 : 1–10; Acts 15 : 1–34; *b* : Acts 18 : 21 *f.*; *c*: Acts 21 : 17–27. The journey reported in Acts 11 : 30, as not being mentioned by Saint Paul himself (Gal. 1 and 2), must be disputed.

it doubted—that this assumption was correct. History, indeed, does not know of any community in those primitive times that saw in Jesus merely the teacher and the exemplar of Christian faith. To the earliest Christians, too, Jesus was an object of their belief. Paul also assumed that all Christians prayed to Christ. He characterizes the Christians as people *who call upon the name of Jesus Christ.*[1] The correctness of this assumption cannot be proved inductively by the few other passages of the New Testament that also mention prayer to Christ.[2] But so much is certain, that in Paul's sphere of observation—and Jerusalem belonged to this sphere —he met prayer to Christ so often that he could look upon it as common to all Christians.

Now the experiences of Paul go back, as was said, to the earliest times after Jesus' death. Two or three years after the death of Jesus, and perhaps at a still earlier date,[3] Paul was won

[1] I Cor. 1 : 2; comp. Rom. 10 : 3; Phil. 2 : 10, 11; II Cor. 12 : 8, 9.—[2] Acts 7 : 58; 9 : 14, 21; 22 : 16; Rev. 5 : 13; 22 : 17, 20; John 14 : 13 *f.;* comp. 5 : 23.— [3] That is Harnack's opinion. In his *Chronologie,* I, 237, he placed the conversion of Saint Paul "in the year of Jesus' death or in the following" (*i. e.,* 30 A. D.); now (*Chronologische Berechnung des Tags von Damaskus; Sitzungsberichte der Berliner Akademie,* 1912, pp. 673–682) he dares to give an accurate date: autumn 31 A. D.

over to Christianity. What Paul could look upon as general Christian conviction must reach back as far as this time. Moreover, it must be just as old as the belief of the first disciples in the resurrection of Jesus. For the following two or three years of the Jerusalem community could only have made it more difficult to believe in the exalted Lord, or, if this belief already existed, they could at most have developed it further in spite of all difficulties; certainly they could never have produced it. But how is the faith of the primitive Christian community to be accounted for if the life of Jesus was only a purely human one? Even from a merely historical point of view this is a weighty argument against the results or, better, presuppositions of liberal Jesus-research; and still more so, as we shall see, from the theological point of view.

Two other points, too, are to be noticed with regard to what we hear about the faith of the oldest Christian community from the letters of Paul.

First, Paul expressly says in I Corinthians: *I delivered unto you first of all that which also I*

received, how that Christ died for our sins.[1] Paul then is made a bearer of false testimony when people speak as if the belief that Christ's death is important for the forgiveness of sins was an idea peculiar to Paul. This belief, too, must date from the earliest times.

Secondly, we must remember that the older apostles at Jerusalem could not have remained ignorant of Paul's views about Jesus in their frequent intercourse with him. But we do not find the least hint that these Pauline views ever became an object of opposition or dispute.[2] From this it follows that the views of the older apostles about Christ, as far as faith, not theology, was concerned, stood on the same level as those of Paul.

This is sufficient to justify the inference that Paul's individual views about Jesus, to which we now turn our attention, cannot be derived from his Damascus experience and from the thoughts about the Messiah which he brought with him as a Jewish theologian. Both certainly exerted their influence. The fact that we hear from Paul more

[1] I Cor. 15 : 3.—[2] Comp. even C. Weizsäcker, *Das apostolische Zeitalter der christlichen Kirche*, Freiburg, 1886, p. 110.

about the exalted Lord than about the historical Jesus is connected with the former. And the latter we can bring into line with the Pauline views about the pre-existence of Christ. But the decisive question is not whether the vision of Damascus and the Jewish theological tradition had a share in forming Paul's views about Jesus. The question is rather this, whether these two factors alone can sufficiently explain the fact, that Paul, as all will admit, did not consider the life of Jesus a purely human one.

In discussing this question we need not be satisfied with the argument advanced before, viz., that the older apostles did not find anything strange in Paul's Christological views. From the epistles of Paul themselves we can show that Paul's religious appreciation of Jesus had stronger and deeper roots than the glare of light which, according to Acts,[1] he saw before Damascus and the traditions of a Messianic theology which he possessed while still a Jew. We shall have to pay attention to four points in this respect.

Firstly, it is nothing but a *fable convenue* of

[1] Acts 9 : 3; 22 : 6; 26 : 13.

former liberal theology that Paul knew next to nothing about the earthly life of Jesus, or that he did not even care to know anything about it. It is true we cannot make out whether Paul saw Jesus personally while he was still a Jew. But I think it likely all the same. For we have no reason to suppose that Paul, who received his rabbinical education in Jerusalem[1] and dwelt there when Stephen died,[2] was absent from Jerusalem just at the times when Jesus visited the holy city; and Paul's utterance, *though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no more*,[3] becomes more intelligible if he includes himself in the number of those who once knew Christ after the flesh. But this question is of minor importance. Weighty, however, is the fact that Paul is very far from betraying merely a superficial acquaintance with the earthly life of Jesus. He mentions his birth,[4] his being betrayed,[5] the institution of the Lord's supper in the night before his passion,[6] his death on the cross,[7] his resurrection,[8] and the appearances of the risen Lord.[9] He sums up his whole life in

[1] Acts 22 : 13.—[2] Acts 7 : 57.—[3] II Cor. 5 : 16.—[4] Gal. 4 : 4.—[5] I Cor. 11 : 23.—[6] I Cor. 11 : 23–25.—[7] Comp. I Cor. 2 : 2.—[8] I Cor. 15 : 4.—[9] I Cor. 15 : 5–8.

the few suggestive words, *He humbled himself and became obedient unto death.*[1] And though he seldom refers to sayings of Christ, yet words of Jesus are echoed by many passages of Paul,[2] as Weinel, too, now admits.[3] Moreover, Paul did not write Gospels, but occasional letters to his congregations. The letters cannot show all that Paul knew of Jesus; we cannot expect to learn from them how much Paul told of Jesus in his missionary sermons. Harnack pointed out very aptly, a short while ago, that one might feel inclined to judge from the Acts that its author knew really nothing else about the life of Christ than what he had gleaned from Christological dogmatics—and yet the same author wrote the third Gospel. Paul, too—Harnack himself calls attention to this parallel[4]—evidently knew far more about Jesus, and related more in his missionary sermons, than he had occasion to reveal in his letters.

Secondly, I think it is just as big a mistake not to recognize that Paul's faith was, to a large ex-

[1] Phil. 2 : 8.—[2] Comp. P. Feine, *Jesus Christus und Paulus*, Leipsic, 1902.—[3] H. Weinel, *Ist das "liberale" Jesusbild widerlegt?* Tübingen, 1910, p. 16.—[4] A. Harnack, *Neue Untersuchungen zur Apostelgeschichte und zur Abfassungszeit der synoptischen Evangelien*, Leipsic, 1911, p. 81 *f.*

tent, dependent on the historical Jesus even apart from his death on the cross. Twice Paul calls Jesus *the image of God*,[1] and once he expressly adds: *of the invisible God*.[2] As early as in the fourth century Marcellus of Ancyra remarked correctly that Paul could not have conceived the image of the invisible God as invisible in itself.[3] Paul, therefore, calling Christ the image of God, cannot refer to the pre-existent Christ, but only to the historical and now exalted Lord. Similarly Paul can only mean the historical and then exalted Jesus, when in the same passage in which he mentions the image of God he says that we see *the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*.[4] The historical Jesus is to him just as well as to John[5] an appearance *full of grace and truth*.

And why was this the case? This brings us to the third point I wish to speak about. Why did Paul see the glory of God in the face of Jesus? Only superficial interpretation, I think, may rest satisfied with seeing the explanation in the vision of light on the road to Damascus. The-

[1] II Cor. 4 : 4; Col. 1 : 15.—[2] Col. 1 : 15.—[3] Fragment No. 93 in Eusebius, *Werke*, vol. IV, ed. E. Klostermann, Leipsic, 1906, p. 205.—[4] II Cor. 4 : 6.—[5] John 1 : 14.

ological discernment, in my opinion, suggests a different interpretation. We find it in II Corinthians 5 : 19: *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.* For the grace of God is the central thought in Paul. And this is the rock on which he stands, that we by believing in Christ have access to this grace of God.[1] Therefore he says that *nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*[2]

And this leads us up to the fourth and last point, viz., on what ground this knowledge of the love of God which is in Christ was based. On theories which Paul had built up? or on ideas of a Saviour-God which in those times cropped up here and there and, which Paul transferred to Jesus? Such a statement would be as foolish as if we were to say that a bridegroom's expressions of gratitude and happiness were but the echo of the many love-songs in the world's literature, of which he could not have been ignorant. Every one who knows what inner life is, hears a different answer out of the words of Paul: *That life which I now live in the flesh I live*

[1] Comp. Rom. 5 : 2.—[2] Rom. 8 : 35–39.

in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up for me.[1] The innermost experiences of the apostle are behind these words, experiences that have to be appreciated theologically.

This is the case also with the writings of John. But I shall mention only one circumstance which will go to prove that here, too, not a theory, but most grateful inward dependence on Jesus, was the basis on which John's high appreciation of Jesus was ultimately founded. Seven times in the first epistle of John we find the Greek pronoun ἐκεῖνος, "that one";[2] six times[3] it is Jesus who is thus characterized. The English translation simply reads: *He*, e. g., *every one that hath this hope set on him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*[4] In the same manner, this pronoun is used by the Gospel of John in a well-known passage: *He that hath seen* (viz., John the apostle) *hath borne witness, and his witness is true, and he* (viz., Jesus) *knoweth that he* (John) *saith true.*[5]

[1] Gal. 2 : 20.—[2] I John 2 : 6; 3 : 3; 3 : 5; 3 : 7; 3 : 16; 4 : 17; 5 : 16.—[3] I John 5 : 16 only is to be excepted.—[4] I John 3 : 3.—[5] John 19 : 35. I have not the slightest doubt that the interpretation of this passage accepted above is the right one. It was proposed by Theodor Zahn (*Zeitschrift für kirchliche Wissenschaft*, 1888, p. 594; comp. his *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*,

Speaking only of "*him*," the writer knew that his readers would understand who was meant. All his thoughts were full of thanks and love toward *him;* speaking of *him* he could not mean any one else. As Zinzendorf, consoling a mother whose two sons had died in missionary work in West India, said only: *He is worthy of all this.* Where we meet such inward indebtedness of love to Jesus, it is foolish to explain the high titles which the Johannine writings heap on Jesus as borrowed from other religious movements or as gradually exaggerated out of the faith of the community. John is backed by his personal experience, when in his first epistle he says of Christ: *This is the true God and eternal life.*[1]

Permit me, finally, to support these arguments by referring in a few words to the faith of the centuries after. Not more than eighty to ninety years after the death of Jesus we find in a man who could not have known Jesus personally, viz. Ignatius of Antioch, of whom we

II, 1900, p. 483 *f.*, not. 16); but has not yet found the attention which it deserves (comp. H. Dechent, *Zur Auslegung der Stelle Joh.* 19 : 35, in *Theologische Studien und Kritiken*, 72, 1899, pp. 446-467).—[1] I John 5 : 20.

possess seven letters, such a faith in Jesus Christ, such a thankful love of Jesus, that religious history is forced to admit: this is a singular phenomenon compared with all we can observe in the non-christian sphere. But it is no singular phenomenon in the Christian development which followed. Again and again in the history of Christianity, faith and charity have been greatest where living and grateful belief in Jesus have been found in the church. Augustine, Bernard of Clairvaux, Francis of Assisi, Paul Gerhardt, the Wesleys, Charles Kingsley, and many others are examples of this fact. And up to the present time thousands of Christian hearts re-echo the words:

> Jesus, our only joy be thou,
> As thou our prize wilt be,
> Jesus, be thou our glory now
> And through eternity.

Is all this but a dead echo of what Paul and John once said? Nobody who knows living Christian faith will say so. But a friend of mine once objected: similar thoughts are also found in the veneration of Mary by the Catholic church. And we must admit that here, too,

there is personal experience at the back of it. Certainly. But the Catholic faith in Mary is only a duplicate of the faith in Christ. It would not have come into existence had not the faith in Christ existed before. The faith in Christ is unique in the history of religion on account of its intimate character, its clear motivation, and its power over sin, hardships, and death.

And this faith can experience for itself what Paul and John experienced in their belief. It feels that the faith of these apostles, in spite of all differences due to their different surroundings, was essentially the same as the faith in Christ of our time. And, besides, this faith finds a support and a foundation in those very words of Jesus we spoke of in the first part of this lecture. It is not historical reasoning; it is theological, religious reasoning, if we now say: here the one supports the other. But we do not need to creep into a corner with such reasoning before the science of our time. Science has to respect realities. And it is a reality that the faith in Jesus the Saviour has been a power in history, and still is a power in the world up to the present day. Historical science cannot do justice to the

sources with its assumption that the life of Jesus was a purely human life. It cannot draw a credible picture of Jesus. But the faith of all times carries a picture of Jesus in its heart which has its prototype in the Jesus of the Gospels and in his own self-consciousness. Every one who knows this faith from his own experience, who can appreciate and join in feeling, however imperfectly, what Paul said: *That life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up for me*,[1] will be firmly convinced that historical science can as little conceive Jesus correctly as natural science can appreciate God correctly. Its method cannot reach up to him. The presupposition, without which historical science cannot undertake to describe the life of Jesus, the presupposition that this life was a purely human life which did not go beyond the analogy of our human experience, cannot do justice to the life of Jesus and to his person. This presupposition is false.

But what then is the correct opinion about Jesus? Is the old Christological tradition of the

[1] Gal. 2 : 20.

church the true one, in spite of the scornful manner in which it is often treated by modern science? Or have we to look for new roads toward an appreciation of Jesus?

These questions will be dealt with in my last two lectures.

V

THE ANCIENT CHRISTOLOGY UNTENABLE

PERMIT me to start from William Benjamin Smith once more. He is in the wrong with his assumption of a purely divine Jesus, who never lived the life of a human being. But he is right in saying that liberal Jesus-research, which acknowledges only a purely human life of Jesus, has not succeeded in sketching a picture of Jesus which does justice to the sources and is credible as it stands. He is also right, as we saw, in the last place, in opposing the assumption itself that the life of Jesus must have been a purely human one. Now, for Smith, it seems, there is no other choice besides these two. The orthodox church doctrine about Jesus is not considered by him worth any serious discussion. He does not deny that it is respectable and venerable in its kind, and to a certain extent even logical and consistent. But still it is not worth his while to spend any time over it. *May it be*

right or wrong, good or bad, he says, *the human mind has, at last, and once for all, gone beyond it, and it is sheer madness to suppose that the human mind could ever turn back on the road it has once set its foot on. It could not do so even if it would. Reason, in this and the following centuries,* he says, *can believe just as little in the God-man as in the geocentric theory of the Ptolemaic system.*[1]

What is the truth about this assertion, which is far from being defended only by W. B. Smith? —to this question we were brought at the end of the preceding lecture. Is the old church doctrine about Christ able to give us the right conception of Jesus, or is it to be set aside as antiquated without the least attempt to vindicate it?

If we turn our attention to this question, we shall first have to take into consideration the orthodox doctrine itself. For inaccurate opinions about it, and very general and superficial conceptions of it, such as are wide-spread in Christendom, make earnest discussion of the problems of Christology practically impossible.

Christ is, in the New Testament, often called

[1] W. B. Smith, *Ecce Deus*, p. 6.

the *Son of God*, and the so-called symbol of the apostles, following the Gospel of John,[1] calls him *the only begotten Son of God*. How is this understood in the orthodox tradition of the Christian churches? In two respects, according to the orthodox doctrine, Christ is the *Son* or *the only begotten Son of God*.[2] He is this, in so far as he was man, because the miraculous overshadowing of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Ghost had formed without the ordinary course of nature the first beginnings of his human body in the womb of his mother.[3] He is this, secondly—and this sense is the more important one to the orthodox tradition—as the *Word of God*, as Saint John says,[4] because he is begotten of the Father from all eternity. *Begotten* here surely is a metaphorical expression; its meaning is that the Son is not a creature of God, but educed from the substance of the Father. And this begetting was from all eternity. Just as no light is ever without lustre, so the Father is never without the Son. Nor was he ever without the Holy Ghost, who, eternally

[1] John 1 : 14, 18; 3 : 16.—[2] Comp., *e. g.*, Gilbert, Bishop of Sarum, *An Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England*, revised and corrected by J. R. Page, London, 1839, p. 51. —[3] Gilbert, l. c.—[4] John 1 : 1.

proceeding from the Father and the Son, is also educed from the same substance. But the Holy Ghost is not said to be *begotten*. And, though we cannot assign a reason why the emanation of the Son and not that of the Holy Ghost likewise is called a begetting, nor understand what begetting strictly signifies here, yet *begotten* is the right word for signifying the eternal relation between the Father and the Son.[1]

This eternal Son of God, of course, is another than the Father and the Holy Ghost. But these three persons, or *hypostases*, as they are called, are of one substance, of one power, of one eternity; and the diversity of "persons," therefore, does not dissolve the unity of the Godhead. The Trinity, or better: Tri-unity, is the one God, of whom it is said: *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.*[2]

Nevertheless—so the orthodox doctrine affirms—only the second person of the holy Trinity became incarnate, taking man's nature upon himself in the womb of the Virgin Mary and of her substance. Two natures therefore were, and since that time are, joined together in the

[1] Comp. Gilbert, l. c., p. 52.—[2] Deut. 6 : 4.

one person of Christ, the divine and the human one. Two natures, I say, not two individuals. For it is not a human personality that the Son of God assumed. He assumed human nature as a potential human individual. And he himself, the one Son of God, became the formative and controlling agency of the two natures, the human nature coming to individual existence in the personality of the incarnate Son of God. The human nature, however, is not altered, nor is the divine; the two natures are united in the one person *unconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably, the properties of each nature being preserved in the union.*[1] The two natures, as has often been said since olden time, form a unity like that of body and soul in man. And yet, in a modern exposition of the thirty-nine articles of the Anglican church,[2] this comparison is expounded in the following way: *In man there is a material and a spiritual nature joined together. They are two natures as different as any we can apprehend among all created beings; yet these make but one man. The matter which the body*

[1] So it is defined at the council of Chalcedon, 451 A. D.—[2] Gilbert, l. c., p. 62.

is composed of does not subsist by itself, is not governed by all those laws of motion to which it would be subjected if it were inanimate matter, but by the indwelling and agency of the soul it has another spring within it and has another course of operations. Now, as the body is still a body, and operates as a body, though it subsists by the indwelling and agency of the soul, so in the person of Jesus Christ the human nature was entire, and still acted according to its own character; yet there was such a union and inhabitation of the eternal word in it that there did arise out of that a communion of names and characters as we find in the scriptures. Nevertheless, of course, the church orthodoxy of all times continued to hold that the divine Word of God, though being the acting subject in the life of Christ, properly speaking did not suffer or die, but only, in virtue of the personal union with the human nature, took part in the passions of his human soul and body.

This will have to suffice, although it is but a very short survey of the orthodox doctrine. I am sorry that it does not show what deep thoughts are woven into this doctrine and with what ingenuity all the details were thought

out. I shall, therefore, illustrate the great amount of mental labor which was devoted to this doctrine by one testimony which will certainly not be suspected. Lessing surely included the orthodox Christology when once he declared about the orthodox system that he knew nothing in the world in which human ingenuity showed and exercised itself in a greater manner.[1]

Notwithstanding, I wish at the outset to state quite openly that I cannot hold this old Christology, this old orthodox answer to the question, Who was Christ? And for three reasons. First, because to rational logic the old Christology appears untenable; secondly, because it does not agree with the New Testament views; and, thirdly, because we can show that it was influenced by antiquated conceptions of Greek philosophy. These three points of view will have to determine the order of treatment in the present lecture.

Rational arguments had a bad reputation in the domain of religion up to the time of the so-

[1] Letter to his brother Charles, 2d Feb., 1774, *Lessings Werke, Hempelsche Ausgabe*, 20, I, 572.

called Enlightenment. And the Enlightenment, which, in religion too, was prepared to recognize only what reason accepted as correct, has not held its own. It is generally admitted now that it expected too much from reason. The religious thoughts which it presumed to retain in the name of reason—the belief in God, the conviction of the freedom of man and the necessity of a moral life, and the belief in the immortality of the soul—these thoughts are to-day regarded as rational ideas by but a few scientifically trained men. And I believe this modern position can be better defended than that of the Enlightenment. Our reason cannot make any definite assertion about supersensual things. Even the freedom of will is, to say the least, a problem it cannot solve. But, if our reason cannot make any definite statements about supersensual things, it is in reality but a poor critic of religious doctrines. That I grant absolutely. Faith has to do with supersensual things; no reason, no science, can reach up to its objects. Hence, I adduce no rational arguments against the church doctrine of the holy Trinity itself. It is beyond all doubt, I grant, that this doctrine

gives grave offence to reason. But it would be wrong to reject the doctrine on this account. It is absolutely impossible for our reason to comprehend God; his eternity, his creation and maintenance of all things, his omnipotence and omniscience are absolutely incomprehensible for us. I can, therefore, very well understand that people keep on saying: We must silence all objections against the doctrine of the divine Trinity, considering that the fact of our not understanding it as it is in itself makes the difficulties appear much greater than they otherwise would seem, if we, while in this earthly life, had sufficient light about it or were capable of forming a more perfect idea about it.[1] People have even tried, with some appearance of success, to make the idea that the holy Trinity is the *one* God more acceptable to our minds. And this did not happen for the first time in the days when—seventy to eighty years ago—the philosophy of Hegel reigned. Augustine had already tried to make the oneness of the triune God intelligible by analyzing human self-consciousness. He said that, just as in our spiritual being there can be

[1] Gilbert, l. c., p. 44.

distinguished memory, and understanding, which conceives all that is in our memory, and will, which connects our understanding with the contents of our memory, so also in God we may distinguish the Father, and the Son his intellect, and the Holy Spirit uniting both in love.[1]

But none the less we cannot and ought not to exclude reason completely from religious thoughts. Even if we claim that reason should recognize religious truths that lie beyond its sphere, no one could expect it to approve such thoughts as hopelessly contradict themselves. But the orthodox Christology can be convicted of three such contradictions.

The first one Augustine already experienced[2] as a disturbing element, and the scholastic theology of the Middle Ages tried in vain to get rid of it.[3] If, as Augustine thinks—and this has been the orthodox opinion since—the distinction of persons in the Trinity is limited to

[1] Comp. A. Dorner, *Augustinus*, Berlin, 1873, pp. 8–16.

[2] Comp. O. Scheel, *Die Anschauung Augustins über Christi Person und Werk*, Tübingen, 1901, p. 47 *f.*

[3] Comp. F. Loofs, *Dogmengeschichte*, 4th edition, Halle, 1906, p. 500, not. 4; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theol.*, III, 3, 4.

their internal relation to each other within the triune God, how was it possible that only the second person was incarnated? And, on the other hand, if the incarnation of the second person only is certain, how can the oneness of the triune God, *i. e.*, how can Christian monotheism be retained? This unsolvable dilemma, perhaps, may be escaped and the incarnation of the Son only be retained, without endangering monotheism, by emphasizing that the Father and the Holy Ghost were not separated from the incarnated Son.

But then the second difficulty I was going to mention becomes all the greater. Even as it is in itself, the idea of the incarnation, the idea that a divine person became the subject of a human life, restricted with regard to time and space, involves the greatest difficulties. For we cannot imagine the Godhead as being constricted by the limitations of human existence. Then only two alternatives remain. We must either assume that the "Son of God," when he became man, did not cease, separate from his humanity, to pervade the world in divine majesty. Or, with Luther, we must venture the

bold thought that, in virtue of the union of the two natures, the human nature from the first moments of its beginning has been partaking of the divine omnipotence and omnipresence.

This latter view, viz., the Lutheran doctrine of the "ubiquity of Christ's body," leads us to absurdities. If we wish to avoid these really unbearable absurdities we are referred to the former view. But does it not destroy the idea of incarnation? Could we still say of the divine person who was also outside the historical Jesus, pervading the world in divine majesty, that he was in reality incarnated? Is not the idea of the incarnation in this manner really changed into the idea of a divine inspiration, an inspiration such as the prophets experienced without any change in God's position to the world? But then it would be impossible still to say that the second person of the holy Trinity was the acting subject in the historical Jesus. This difficulty evidently becomes greater still if the Father and the Holy Ghost were not separated from the incarnated Son. For in that case it is still more impossible to retain the idea of a real incarnation of the Son. Perhaps these

arguments are too difficult to be made intelligible with a few short words. But I may not spend more time on them. I must be satisfied with having just mentioned them. This mention of them was necessary. For here lie the greatest difficulties of the orthodox Christology, which cannot be surmounted by any tricks of reasoning.

More easily understood is the difficulty which I am going to mention in the third and last place. The divine Trinity can, if need be, perhaps be thought of as the one God, the triune God, *before* the incarnation of the second person. But how is it after the incarnation? It is orthodox doctrine that the incarnated Son of God retained his human form, *i. e.* the human nature he had assumed, even after his ascension. Can, then, the distinction between the incarnated Son, on the one hand, and the Father and the Holy Ghost, on the other, be conceived of as being confined to the internal relations in which each person stands to the other within the one Godhead? And if this is not the case, the oneness of the Trinity is dissolved after the incarnation; the Trinity has become something different after the incarnation

from what it was before.[1] If neither is the case, then the humanity of Christ stands beside the Trinity. And then, also during the earthly life of Jesus, it could not have stood in a real personal union with the second person of the Trinity. Then the idea of the incarnation here again changes into that of an inspiration. Our dogmatics, I think, does not frankly face these difficulties. This, however, does not overcome them. These difficulties alone are sufficient to wreck the orthodox Christology. Augustine, the creator of the Occidental doctrine of the Trinity, when pressed by others, asked himself whether the exalted Christ could see God with his bodily eyes, and he answered the question in the negative.[2] This proves that the difficulties we have discussed broke up the dogma of the Trinity and the closely related Christology even for Augustine himself. And the cause of this was not only that

[1] As F. L. Steinmeyer, once professor at the University of Berlin († 1900), did not hesitate to assume when he said: "*Oder wann hätte der Vater je zurückempfungen, was er in dieser heiligen Nacht* (Christmas) *gegeben? Was Gott gibt, das verbleibt den Empfängern; in dem Sinne wird es nie wieder das Seine, in welchem er es einst besessen*" (*Beiträge zum Schriftverständnis in Predigten*, I, 2d edition, Berlin, 1854, p. 41).—[2] Ep. 92, Migne, series lat. XXXIII, p. 318; comp. ep. 161, *ibid.*, p. 702 *f.*

Augustine and the whole church orthodoxy as far as the eighteenth century pictured Christ's *body of glory*[1] too much like an earthly body when speaking of the bodily eyes of the exalted Christ; the difficulties, on the contrary, unavoidably remain so long as the humanity of the exalted Christ is conceived as something different from his Godhead.

There are probably Christians on whom these rational arguments will make no impression. The belief in the triune God, they think, is irrational as it is; a few irrationalities more do not make the matter more difficult. I do not think that such thoughts are pious. In our time, too, we must be on our guard lest it may be said of us: *The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you.*[2] But so much is true: no one of us could find fault with Christians for accepting these irrationalities if the orthodox Christology, which includes these irrationalities, were presented by the Scriptures.

But that is not the case. This is the second point I have to prove to-day. It is an extremely wide domain, viz., the whole domain of the Chris-

[1] Phil. 3 : 21.—[2] Rom. 2 : 24.

tological views of the New Testament, which we now come to face. It is impossible in a short lecture to enter into these views of the New Testament in all their details. I must be satisfied with calling attention to a few decisive points. Five will suffice.

It is a view of vital importance to orthodox Christology that the historical Jesus is the pre-existent *Son of God.* Do we find anything about this in the New Testament? Certainly many New Testament passages assert the pre-existence of Christ; that is, they assert or assume that Jesus did not begin to exist when his earthly life began. *O Father,* Jesus says in the high-priestly prayer in the Gospel of John, *glorify me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*[1] But where in the New Testament is this prehistoric, yea, this antemundane, Christ called the *Son of God?* Where are we told that he is as such begotten of the Father before the world? In the prologue of the Gospel of John, the pre-existent Christ is not called the *Son* but the *word,* and we are told that this *was in the beginning.*[2] Only one passage in the Pauline

[1] John 17 : 5.—[2] John 1 : 1, 2.

epistles might be suspected of referring to an antemundane birth of Christ. In Colossians 1:18 Paul calls Christ *the first-born of every creature.* But here the Greek equivalent for first-born[1] only means that he was before every creature and above all creatures.[2] Then the only remaining support of the later doctrine is Jesus' title *Son of God,* which, as we all know, occurs very often in the New Testament. But in the New Testament it is applied to the historical Jesus, either with reference to his birth out of the Spirit of God,[3] or because the Spirit came down upon Jesus at his baptism,[4] or—without reference to a date of its entrance—because the Spirit of God lived in him,[5] or because Jesus was the Messiah,[6] or because he stood in a unique position of love toward God.[7] The term, *the only begotten Son,* too, only signifies what was mentioned last. For the Greek equivalent for *only begotten*[8] does not mean anything else than

[1] πρωτότοκος.—[2] Comp. E. Haupt's interpretation of Col. 1:15 (*Kommentar über das N. T., begründet von H. A. W. Meyer,* viii and ix, *Die Gefangenschaftsbriefe,* Göttingen, 1897, p. 25 *ff.*) and Psalm 89:27, where it is said of the King of Israel: "*I will make him my first-born* (πρωτότοκον), *higher than the kings of the earth.*"—[3] Luke 1:35.—[4] Mark 1:11.—[5] Rom. 1:3.—[6] Matt. 16:16.—[7] Matt. 11:27, and in the Gospel of John.—[8] μονογενής.

unique or peerless.[1] And it was not modern exegesis that first interpreted the term *Son of God* thus. In the first half of the fourth century Marcellus of Ancyra emphatically pointed out that in the New Testament Jesus is called the Son of God only after the incarnation, and not in his pre-existence. And the older apostolic fathers, the so-called first epistle of Clement, dating from about 95 A. D., and the Ignatian letters[2] interpret the term *Son of God* in this manner only.

It is easier to show, secondly, that the idea of the triune God, as dogmatized later, is foreign to the New Testament. We surely find the belief in the New Testament that God was in Christ, and that the Holy Spirit that lives in the single Christians and in the whole community is the spirit of God. That God the Father reveals himself also in the Son and in the Spirit, that is a conviction which is in accordance with the New Testament. But there cannot be the least doubt, nor can we alter the fact, that when

[1] When the widow's son at Nain is characterized as *the only son of his mother* (Luke 7 : 12), the same word is used in the Greek New Testament which in John 1 : 14, 18 is translated *only begotten.*

[2] Written about 110 A. D.

the New Testament speaks of *God*, it is thinking only of the one God whom Jesus called his Father and the Father of the faithful, too. This is shown without the shadow of a doubt by the apostolic greeting: *Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*[1] And the case is not different throughout the New Testament. In the Gospel of John, in the high-priestly prayer of Jesus, we even read: *This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ.*[2] Also the well-known prayerful wish of the apostle Paul: *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all*[3] points in the same direction. For the apostle does not speak here about three persons in the one God, but about the love of the one God, and in addition thereto, or better: in connection with it, of the grace of Jesus Christ and the communion of the Holy Ghost.

It is easier still to show that orthodox Christology does not agree with the New Testament views in a third respect. According to the ortho-

[1] Rom. 1 : 7; I Cor. 1 : 2; II Cor. 1 : 1 ; Eph. 1 : 1.—[2] John 17 : 3.—[3] II Cor. 13 : 13.

dox Christology, the personal subject, the supreme I, of the historical Jesus is the second person of the holy Trinity. Does the fact that Jesus prayed harmonize with this? Does the circumstance that he said to Mary Magdalene: *I ascend unto my Father and your Father and to my God and your God*,[1] harmonize with it? We have seen, indeed, that the self-consciousness of Jesus surpassed the measure of a human self-consciousness. But can we deny that in the whole New Testament a human self-consciousness is the frame in which the inner life of Jesus first comes to our notice? His humility, his obedience, his trust in God cannot be interpreted differently. We shall discuss in the last lecture how this view can be reconciled with the fact that the frame of a human self-consciousness proves to be too strait to make the personality of Jesus intelligible. Here it will suffice to have shown that the orthodox Christology which considers a divine person as the personal subject in Christ does not correspond with the New Testament views.

The fourth point I wish to mention is, that

[1] John 20 : 17.

the experiences of Jesus, like his self-consciousness, are at variance with orthodox Christology. Orthodoxy of all ages was worried by the fact that we are told of Jesus, with regard to his youth, that *he increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men.*[1] Could this be harmonized with the assumption that the real subject of the historical Jesus was the eternal Son of God? Orthodoxy of ancient times considered these two statements as being harmonized by the assertion that the eternal Son of God grew, suffered, and died only according to his human nature. But who will deny that our very self itself is growing during our life? And certainly it sounds very forced to say that the Son of God, who by his own nature could never suffer, suffered nevertheless in his human flesh and in his human soul! Surely such forced constructions are quite foreign to the New Testament.

Fifthly and lastly, I shall have to point out that in the New Testament Jesus, even after his exaltation, appears in such an organic connection with the human race as hardly to

[1] Luke 2 : 52.

agree with orthodox Christology. Especially those very writers of the New Testament who most obviously do not assume that the life of Jesus was a purely human one—viz., Paul and John—make this very clear. For Paul the risen Lord is *the first-born from the dead*,[1] *the first-born among many brethren*.[2] The faithful, in Paul's opinion, are predestinated by God *to be conformed to the image of his Son as heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ*.[3] Very similarly we read in the high-priestly prayer in the Gospel of John: *They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world*[4] and: *Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am;*[5] *that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, . . . that they may be one even as we are one;*[6] and *Thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me*.[7] In Revelation we find the same thoughts. Here the exalted Christ says: *He that overcometh I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame and sat down with my Father in his throne*.[8]

[1] Col. 1 : 18.—[2] Rom. 8 : 29.—[3] Rom. 8 : 29 and 8 : 17.—[4] John 17 : 16.—[5] John 17 : 24.—[6] John 17 : 21.—[7] John 17 : 23.—[8] Rev. 3 : 21.

I admit that these words would be misinterpreted if they were used to remove the distance which, according to the New Testament, exists between Christ and his faithful followers. Christ is, according to Paul—and also according to John—*the Lord, in whose name every knee should bow of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth.*[1] But the passages quoted show undoubtedly that, according to the New Testament conception, Jesus is *the first-born among many brethren* in a deeper sense than orthodox Christology is able to recognize—for, according to it, Christ, although he was a man because he assumed human nature, yet remained a divine subject.

These five points show that orthodox Christology does not agree with the New Testament views. And those who are impartial enough to see this are thereby convinced that the old orthodox Christology cannot give us the correct interpretation of the historical person of Jesus. And there is hardly a single learned theologian—I know of none in Germany—who defends the orthodox Christology in its unaltered form. And

[1] Phil. 2 : 10.

all modifications which can be observed lie in the direction of removing the most obvious mistake of the orthodox Christology by doing more justice to the humanity of Christ. I shall have to say something about such modifications of the old doctrine in the following lecture.

To-day it only remains for me to strengthen the proof that orthodox Christology is untenable by pointing out that this Christology was born under the influence of Greek philosophical ideas which we no longer share.

In going through this proof I shall have to appeal to the closest attention and to considerable mental exertion on the part of my respected hearers. But if I succeed in mentioning only the principal facts I hope to be understood without any difficulty.

I must follow a somewhat circuitous path. The Gospel of John, as we all know, begins with the words: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,* and in the fourteenth verse of the same chapter we read: *And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and*

truth. John here undoubtedly speaks about Jesus Christ; of him, he says, that the word of God was made flesh in him. But it is not so certain what is meant by this expression *the Word.* At the time when the Gospel of John was written philosophical speculations were current which employed this expression in a peculiar sense. The Greek term for *word* (λόγος) has two meanings, "word" and "reason." In the latter sense the term had been used by the pantheism of the Stoic philosophy when it described God both as the primitive matter of the world and as the "Logos," *i. e.* the reason, which pervades the world. This Stoic idea of the "Logos" was modified in a peculiar way by the Jewish—and, with regard to his thoughts, also Greek—philosopher, Philo of Alexandria, a contemporary of Jesus. Philo did not, like the Stoic philosophy, consider God immanent in the world. With Plato he held the transcendence of God, and in his teaching there was even a sharp dualistic antithesis between God and the world, between the supreme Being and matter. Philo, therefore, could not imagine any action of God upon the world of matter save through intermediate

powers. The central power of God, comprehending in itself all subordinate powers, is for Philo the *Logos*. He, too, considers this Logos as the reason which pervades the world. But, in divergence from the Stoic philosophy, Philo distinguishes the Logos from God. He calls him "the first-born Son of God," "the second God," "the organ of the creation." But on the other hand he combines this Logos so clearly with God that people have asked again and again whether the Logos is conceived of as personal by Philo or whether all the personality ascribed to the Logos by Philo is only meant figuratively. However this may be, for Philo the Logos, *i. e.*, the reason of God pervading the world, is certainly to some extent one with God and again to some extent a second beside him.

Now, people have not been wanting who asserted that the term *Logos* in the Gospel of John is to be taken in this philosophical sense advocated by Philo and circulated widely after him. In favor of this they quoted what John, too, says of the Logos: *All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made.*[1] There was also a time in German the-

[1] John 1 : 3.

ology when every one, who did not interpret the term *Logos* in John in the philosophical sense, was considered behind the times and unscientific. This time is not quite past, but it is approaching its end. I, for my part, never considered this hypothesis probable. For it is quite plain that the beginning of John's Gospel refers to the beginning of the first book of Moses. There we have the same introduction: *In the beginning.* And every school-boy knows what the medium of creation was here. The word! For *and God said* is repeated in the narrative like the burden of a song. It is likewise well known how often we read in the prophets of the Old Testament: *The word of the Lord came unto the prophet.*[1] John, in my opinion, was thinking of these two circumstances. God first revealed himself in the creation, and then to Israel, especially when his word came to the prophets. Jesus Christ not only brought the word of God, as the prophets did; he was the Word in everything he said and did; the word was made flesh in him. I do not believe that there is an incar-

[1] Comp., *e. g.*, I Sam. 15 : 10; Jer. 1 : 2; 2 : 1; 7 : 1; Ezek. 6 : 1; Hosea 1 : 1; Joel 1 : 1; Jonah 1 : 1; Micah 1 : 1; Zeph. 1 : 1; Haggai 1 : 1; Zech. 1 : 1.

nation theory behind these words. The sentence, "The word was made flesh," means more than when we say, *e. g.*, "In this man all the amiable qualities of his forefathers are personified." But this way of speaking, in my opinion comes nearer to the meaning of what John says, "The word was made flesh," than the later incarnation theories. But this is of minor importance. What I want to say is this: in the Gospel of John the term *Logos* has nothing to do with philosophy. Here it simply means "word."

I may adduce two arguments in favor of this assertion. In the book of Revelation the term *Logos* also takes a prominent place. In a grand picture, in which the seer describes Christ's return for the last judgment, he says:[1] *I saw the heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and he that sat thereon was called Faithful and True . . . and he hath a name written* (viz., upon him or upon his horse) *that no one knoweth but he himself.* Then, in the next verse, it is said: *And he is arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood, and his name is called "The Word of God."* Here it is not the pre-existent Christ who is called the

[1] Rev. 19 : 11 *ff.*

Logos. Hence, there is no room here for the logos-idea of Philo. The returning Christ, who fulfils all the words and prophecies of God, and who is therefore called *Faithful and True*, is called the Word of God for this very reason, that God's Word becomes full truth in him. No less convincing are two passages in the letters of Ignatius, written about 110 A. D. These letters are strongly influenced by Johannine thought. For this reason it is important that Ignatius calls Christ the *Word of God coming forth out of silence*,[1] *i. e.*, the Word of revelation with which God breaks the silence which he had observed up to that moment. In the same sense Ignatius also calls Christ *the truthful mouth, through which the Father has spoken*.[2] Here, in Ignatius, there can be no doubt that the term *Logos* has nothing to do with philosophy. And, as Ignatius is dependent on John, his conception may give us a clew for the correct interpretation of the term in John.

But what we do not have in John and Ignatius we find in later times. And we must admit that the characterization of Christ as the *Logos* in

[1] *Ep. ad. Magnes.*, 8, 2.—[2] *Ep. ad. Romans*, 8, 2.

John made this possible. The Greek apologists of the second century, educated Christians, who tried to defend Christianity against the pagans, combined the philosophical logos-idea of their time with their Christology. To them the pre-existent Christ was the reason of God pervading the world, his *Son*, because before all worldly time he was produced by God, being a second one beside the God of the universe, but of the same kind with him, as produced of his substance. There we have the foundation of the orthodox Christology. But only the foundation. For to the apologists the Logos and God were two in number without any restriction, and, besides, the apologists did not regard the Logos as being eternal; he is begotten or created by God (they do not yet make a sharp distinction between these two) at the time of the creation of the world and with the purpose that he might be the creative organ.

The latter was the first to be corrected by the later development. Origen, the greatest theologian of the old Greek church, who died in 254, made this correction. He was highly educated in philosophy, and his philosophical

thoughts were akin to those of the first teachers of the Neoplatonic philosophy, which arose in his time. These Neoplatonists regarded as the eternal core of this sensible world, if I may say so, an eternal ideal world of immaterial beings, which existed also before the created world. An eternal ideal world, I say. That did not exclude the idea of God in their thought. God, in their opinion, is the original source of this ideal world. Eternally he calls this world into existence, as light always radiates splendor and brightness and heat. Thus, too, Origen thought. The first of the immaterial spiritual beings of the immaterial world which he derived from God is the Logos. Through him the Holy Ghost and all other immaterial beings, the angels and the souls of men, were created. Here, for the first time, we have the idea of the eternal begetting, that is, the idea that the Logos or Son was begotten of the Father from all eternity. In the case of Origen, this idea was not a strange one. For just as the Logos is begotten of the Father from all eternity, so all other immaterial spirits are eternally created through him by God. For Origen the idea of an eternal beget-

ting of the Son was, therefore, nothing irrational, but rather a special case of the eternal causation of the immaterial ideal world by God. Later on the Origenistic idea of an eternal immaterial world was abandoned. But the idea of the eternal begetting of the Logos, or Son, remained,—now nothing more than an irrational fragment of a total conception which was formerly more intelligible.

The second shortcoming which, as we saw, the thoughts of the apologists, when compared with the later church doctrine, show, was not remedied even by Origen. Just as for the apologists God, the creator of the universe, and his Logos were two in number—occasionally, Justin, one of these apologists, also adds the Spirit and the whole angelic host[1]—so for Origen the supreme God and the Logos and the Holy Ghost were three in number, a Trinity, not a Triunity, three *hypostases*, or essences, as he called them. In the fourth century, after long struggle, which I cannot describe here, the point was reached where a distinction was made between the terms which for Origen still had the same meaning,

[1] *Apol.*, I, 13, 1–3.

viz., between hypostasis and essence. Now it became orthodox doctrine: the Father, the Son, and the Spirit have one essence or substance, but they are three hypostases—or "persons," as the Occident said. The Orient has, on the whole, not gone beyond this conception. The doctrine of the Trinity there retained a tritheistic character. For to the orthodoxy of the Orient the Godhead is one, because the Son and the Spirit only derived their origin from the one Father-God and because they are with him of the same kind or substance, of the same power, of the same eternity. We may find it strange that this was considered as doing justice to Christian monotheism. But it becomes more intelligible when we consider that our clearly defined idea of personality was unknown in those times. God was looked upon as the highest essence, and as long as no other equally high Being was placed side by side with him, people thought monotheism was preserved intact, even if two further hypostases were regarded as having emanated from this one highest essence.

In the Western church Christian monotheism has been restored by the great Augustine

(† 430). For him the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are the *one* God. He, too, in thinking so was influenced by philosophical ideas. As philosopher, he considered the idea of oneness and the idea of simplicity indispensable to the idea of God. God is for him the highest absolute indivisible and, therefore, simple Being or essence, in contrast with the world, which exists only conditionally in its manifoldness and changeableness. But biblical ideas, too, induced Augustine to modify the older doctrine of the Trinity. He wished to do justice to monotheism, to do justice to the Old Testament word: *Hear, Israel, the Lord our God is one God.*[1] For this reason he said that with regard to the world the Father, the Son, and the Spirit always act together as the one God. The distinctions of the persons were in his mind limited to the internal relations within the Godhead, viz., that the Son is begotten of the Father, and the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son. This is the origin of the orthodox doctrine about the Son of God and the holy Trinity or, better, Triunity, in the Western church.

[1] Deut. 6 : 4.

In the same way we may show that the doctrine of the two natures in Jesus Christ originated in the culture of the Græco-Roman world. Quoting Goethe's *Faust*, we may speak of *two souls* which we feel in our breast, a lower one with sensual desires and a higher one which is open to everything ideal. In ancient times people would in such a case speak of "two natures" in man. We even know of a more developed form of this idea by not a few Christians of the second century, which, by combining philosophical thoughts and Christian traditions, tried to form a general view of the world and its history. I refer to the so-called Gnostics. Many of them distinguished three elements in the world—the spiritual, the psychical, and the material. Man according to them had or could have three natures—a spiritual, a psychical, and a material or bodily one. The question how the unity of self-consciousness was to be realized in such a case did not cause these speculators any great difficulty. The strongest of these natures in each case was considered as the leading one, which really ruled over the others. In a modified form this terminology of different natures was even

applied to animals. We possess a book on the peculiarities of several animals, the so-called *Physiologus*, which is preserved in a later Christian revision, but is in its original pagan form perhaps as old as the second century. Here the characteristic peculiarities of the animals which are mentioned are called different "natures" of these animals. Thus, we are told of the lion that he has *three natures:* the first is, that he, when scenting a hunter, wipes out his footprints with his tail; the second, that he sleeps with open eyes; the third, that his whelp is born dead but begins to live on the third day.[1] Here "natures" means nothing else than characteristic peculiarities.

Now, it is natural that Christians at a very early date—I believe from the very beginnings of Christianity—observed characteristics of human lowliness and characteristics of divine majesty and glory in Jesus Christ. Under these circumstances it was not strange for that time that people as early as the end of the second century spoke of "two natures," the human

[1] F. Lauchert, *Geschichte des Physiologus*, Strassburg, 1889, p. 229 *ff.*

and the divine one, which were to be distinguished in Christ. The question how the unity of such a person was to be imagined did not cause any difficulties for more than three centuries. In the Eastern church many theologians as early as the fourth century considered the higher nature, the divine nature—that is, the divine Logos—as the actual subject in the historical Jesus, while his humanity was looked upon as not having a personality of its own. In the Western church people for a long time thought differently. But ultimately the Greek view prevailed.

If you look back upon all I have gone through, I hope you will understand why orthodox Christology could seem quite acceptable as long as Greek culture survived. It harmonized with the culture of the time. The incarnation question, too, caused no difficulty to Greek thinkers. When Celsus, the pagan controversialist, mockingly asked whether the Logos left his throne vacant when he became a human being, Origen opposed him with the argument that God fills all in all, that he does not vacate one place in order to betake himself to another, and that,

therefore, he descends to men only by means of his grace.[1] And, as I have already said, all Greek theologians clung to this view, thinking that the Logos, the divine reason, pervading the world, after his incarnation, in spite of his being in Christ, retained his position toward the world, *i. e.*, continued to pervade and to govern the world. Even about the year 200 Clement of Alexandria, the teacher of Origen, still said quite naïvely that the Logos was made flesh also in the prophets.[2] In short, in the early church the idea of "incarnation" was not yet sharply distinguished from that of a divine inspiration, but in the course of time the distinction became more and more defined, and this made the church doctrine more irrational than it had been at first when people began to use the term *Logos*.

And that is the case with the whole Christology of the early church. In the older times the terms of Greek culture were the natural forms by which the people of those times tried to do justice to that which the New Testament says about Christ. What *we* find unsatisfactory in

[1] *Orig. c. Celsum*, 4, 5 and 4, 14, ed. Koetschau, Leipsic, 1879, I, 277 and 285.

[2] *Excerpta* 19, *Opera*, ed. W. Dindorf, Oxford, 1869, III, 433, 5.

those forms remained hidden to them. No age knows itself sufficiently. In those forms people had their faith in Christ as far as it was understood by them.

But the case is different with us. We either think that human philosophy can form no tenable ideas at all about God and things divine, or if we think differently we have, at any rate, other views than Philo and the Neoplatonists. Hence, the orthodox doctrine about Christ, which was derived from the Christology of the ancient church, contains elements which to our mind are contradictions. We also notice, therefore, what remained hidden to the theologians of the ancient church, viz., in how many points the old Christology does not do full justice to the New Testament views. It is, therefore, our duty to concede that orthodox Christology does not give us an appreciation of the person of Christ which is able to satisfy us.

Can we come to such an appreciation by the aid of other views? This question will occupy us in the next and last lecture.

VI

MODERN FORMS OF CHRISTOLOGY

I BEGIN now my last lecture. It may be useful, first, to recapitulate the results of my previous lectures. We have seen that Jesus was a man who lived in this world of ours. But the attempts to describe his life as a purely human one have not led to tenable results. They proved to be inadequate from the scientific historical point of view, because they do not allow an unprejudiced appreciation of the sources. Besides, they proved inadequate, because the assumption that the life of Jesus was a purely human one is disproved by the sources and by the experiences of believers in all ages. For the self-consciousness of Jesus breaks the frame of a purely human life, and the experience of believers in all the Christian centuries confirms the assumption that the disciples of Jesus were right in seeing more in him than a mere man. But we have also seen that orthodox Christology cannot give us a satisfactory appreciation of the

person of Jesus. It not only puts insurmountable obstacles in the way of thinking people, but also does not harmonize with the New Testament, and is intricately interwoven with a philosophical view of the world which we no longer share.

This criticism of orthodox Christology, which I tried to justify in the last lecture, is not the property of a few people only. To a certain extent it may be considered as generally recognized by the whole German Protestant theology of the present time. In the preceding generation there was still a learned theologian in Germany who thought it correct and possible to reproduce the old orthodox formulas in our time without the slightest modification, viz., Friedrich Adolph Philippi, of Rostock († 1882). At present I do not know of a single professor of evangelical theology in Germany of whom this might be said. All learned Protestant theologians of Germany, even if they do not do so with the same emphasis, really admit unanimously that the orthodox Christology does not do sufficient justice to the truly human life of Jesus and that the orthodox doctrine of the two natures in Christ cannot be

retained in its traditional form. All our systematic theologians, so far at least as they see more in Jesus than the first subject of Christian faith, are seeking new paths in their Christology.

The modern systematic constructions as such are of no interest for the question we have to deal with. Not this is important for us, how systematic theology is to formulate the doctrine about Christ, but only this: how we are to interpret the historical person of Jesus. Now, we have seen that orthodox Christology cannot give us a satisfactory appreciation of the person of Jesus. We must, therefore, ask whether we are, by the aid of other views, in a position to come to an appreciation of the person of Jesus which harmonizes better with the sources and with modern thought. That is the question with a discussion of which I shall to-day bring my lectures to a close.

I begin the discussion by referring once more to orthodox Christology. It has one peculiarity not yet touched upon, which we must understand before proceeding.

Orthodox Christology professes to be a scientific knowledge. In orthodox times it was con-

sidered possible for a learned theologian to expound this knowledge even if he possessed no living faith himself. This opinion was the natural consequence of the views about the holy Bible current at that time. The Bible was looked upon as the verbally inspired book of revelation, which communicates knowledge about the supersensual world just as a knowledge of natural things may be gained from nature and history. The principal thing was to understand this book of revelation and to combine its statements in the right manner. This view of the Bible has rightly been abandoned by modern theology. The Bible itself does not claim to be verbally inspired divine revelation, and its contents frequently do not harmonize with this assumption. If a divine revelation has really taken place, as we Christians believe, then it took place not through a book which God inspired, but by means of men endowed by God, who through their words and actions made God's truth known to their fellow-men and deepened it. The books of the Bible are the historical records of this revelation. And we have already seen how this is the case with the New Testa-

ment books. They record this revelation when they attest the faith of the New Testament writers to us. Even the Gospels, we have seen, give us the story of Jesus as it lived in the faith of the community. And still more the remaining New Testament books are testimonies of the faith of the primitive Christian times. This shows that orthodox Christology is not knowledge that is independent of faith. It is a mixture of historical knowledge and assertions of faith, partly of the New Testament writers, partly of later Christians, even of such as combined their faith with philosophical thoughts.

Such a mixture can, as such, not give a satisfactory answer to the question who Jesus was. It is possible, indeed, and, as we shall see, the right thing for us to do, to combine historical knowledge and assertions of faith in answering the question who Jesus was. But such an answer can satisfy us only if it is a combination of *our* convictions of faith with historical truths, and if we have a clear notion as to the character of this combination, *i. e.*, as to how far the historical truths extend and where the convictions of faith begin. Our first task for to-day will, therefore,

be this: to ascertain what historical knowledge gives us, and what faith in Christ contains in itself.

The first question we already considered some time ago. Historical research shows us a number of traits in the historical Jesus which it cannot combine into a homogeneous picture on the basis of its presuppositions. It shows us a human being in Jesus, a real man, who in many respects stood within the limitations of his time; but at the same time a man who considered himself the Messiah promised by God, who was aware that he had much to say to the human race in the name of God, who called his death the sacrifice of the New Covenant, who was convinced that he stood in a unique relation to God —a man who did not leave in suspense the fact that it was of great import to the fate of everyone what position he took up with respect to him. We saw that there is no scope for this self-consciousness of Jesus within the frame of a purely human life. Historical science, which is forced to recognize the analogy of human experience, is, therefore, in the case of Jesus, placed before a dilemma. It must either reduce the notices

about the self-consciousness of Jesus to such an extent that they fit into the frame of a purely human life; or it must declare itself incompetent to speak the last word on this question, *i. e.*, it must be satisfied with a frank acknowledgment of the existence of these heterogeneous elements which it cannot combine, and must then leave it to other, not purely historical, observation to unite the heterogeneous elements into one uniform whole.

If such a union is possible at all, it can only be effected by faith. Our question now is, therefore, this: What convictions are included in the belief in Christ? In the belief, I say. Belief is not the acceptance as true of what other people have said a generation or sixty generations before us. Belief is confidence which is sure of itself, confidence which is based upon real inner experiences. But human experiences are of different depths. Not those experiences are to be considered as authoritative which are gained by a man who has only just begun to take notice of Jesus. Those experiences here come into consideration which are the common property of ripe Christians of all ages. We shall

not go wrong if we, in pointing to these experiences, lay stress on that which belief in Christ, as it is found to-day, has in common with the faith of the first Christians shown by the New Testament. This faith, in my opinion, includes two things: First, that Christ becomes a revelation of God for us, and; secondly, that he shows us—and that in his own person—what we are to become like.

I shall have to enter more fully upon these two points. I need not prove that the former is a New Testament view. It harmonizes with definite statements of Jesus which are handed down to us. Not only in John does he say: *He that hath seen me hath seen the Father;*[1] in the synoptic Gospels also it is said: *No man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.*[2] John gives expression to the thought that Christ is the revelation of God, when he says: *The word was made flesh,*[3] and without any imagery he declares: *No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son . . . he hath declared him.*[4] And, as we saw, Paul calls Jesus *the image of*

[1] John 14 : 9.—[2] Matt. 11 : 27.—[3] John 1 : 14.—[4] John 1 : 18.

the invisible God,[1] speaks of *the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*.[2] These assertions of faith are repeated, often in a new shape, through all the centuries of the Christian era, not because people simply repeated what the apostles had said, but because their inner voice recognized the claims of Jesus as claims of the holy God, because the merciful love of Jesus preached the love of God, and because faith gained the courage from its confidence in Jesus and his innocent suffering to trust in this merciful love of God. And it is not only the past that has experienced this. The present, too, knows this experience; many in our midst know it. We can easily show this if we try to eliminate from our thoughts everything we have experienced of God merely through Jesus, either directly or indirectly. Would any knowledge of God remain? Much, indeed, if we recognize the prophets of the Old Testament. But they belong to Jesus; Jesus did not preach a new God, but wished to reveal more fully the one God whom Israel already knew. And still even the prophets would leave us in many imperfections.

[1] Col. 1 : 15.—[2] II Cor. 4 : 6.

For relics of Jewish national limitations are still to be found in them, and all their expectations of God's loyalty to his covenant would appear buried with the Babylonian exile, with the poor state of affairs which followed, with the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of Israel among all nations. And if we eliminate the prophets, can the philosophy of the Greeks and Romans teach us to know God? Their God is after all but a part of the world, the primitive matter and the rational order of the universe—nothing more. The philosophy of the Christian centuries likewise does not bring us any farther. If we eliminate what it took out of the New Testament, it is not a hair's breadth in advance of the philosophy of the old Greeks and Romans. All we possess of the knowledge of God we have through Jesus, though in his connection with the Old Testament. We are impressed as by a word of God when we hear Jesus saying: *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;*[1] and: *Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment;*[2] and: *Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust*

[1] Matt. 5 : 8.—[2] Matt. 5 : 22.

after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart;[1] and: *Be ye, therefore, perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect;*[2] and many other sayings. We hear a kind invitation of God when Jesus says: *Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest,*[3] or: *The Son of man is come to save that which was lost.*[4] Above all, to my mind, it is the cross of Christ which to-day still reveals God's character to us. Here, too, I grant, many erroneous ideas have crept in. It was erroneous to say that it was the suffering and death of Jesus which moved God to mercy toward the human race. Here an erroneous theory has been combined with the faith in God's love, a theory which originated in paganism. For it is pagan to think that God has to be reconciled by sacrifices. Even among the Jews sacrifices had a different meaning. They were looked upon as instituted by God himself, in his grace, lest the Jews should forget his holiness when approaching him. And especially the sacrifice of the covenant was but a token which was to assure Israel of the grace of God; it did not cause this grace. And in ac-

[1] Matt. 5 : 28.—[2] Matt. 5 : 45.—[3] Matt. 11 : 28.—[4] Matt. 18 : 11.

cord with this view the New Testament says: *God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son*,[1] and Paul declares: *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself*.[2] The sacrifice of the New Covenant, therefore, was not necessary in order that God's wrath might be changed into love, but in order that we might believe in the grace of God without making light of sin. The holy God can only forgive if people accept his grace in the right manner. And we can experience to the present day that the suffering of Christ enables us more than anything else to accept the grace of God in the right manner. The man who feels his sin and then remembers that Jesus, who committed no sin and had no other wish than to serve mankind, was put to death, in spite of this, by the wickedness of men, that man will feel again and again what the first Christians felt: he suffered what we deserved to suffer; he was *wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities*.[3] That man will understand that God permitted Jesus to suffer (or, better: made him suffer) thus in order that all who cling to him might gain the courage to

[1] John 3 : 16.—[2] II Cor. 5 : 19.—[3] Isaiah 53 : 5.

believe in God's grace without forgetting the great contrast of their sins with his holiness. People can, therefore, experience at the present day what marvellous power belongs to that faith which Paul expresses with the words: *God made him to be sin who knew no sin* (that is, he treated Christ as a sinner by giving him up to such an opprobrious death), *in order that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*[1] This faith makes the heart confident before God, and yet, conscious of God's holiness, for it does not allow us to look upon sin as of little consequence. At the same time it strengthens our power to do good, for the faithful Christian is, as Paul says, *dead with Christ unto sin.*[2] Thus an ever-deepening knowledge of the grace and love and holiness of God is opened by this faith in the cross of Christ. That these experiences are not foreign to the New Testament, every Bible reader knows. That they are not found outside of the Christian community is shown by an observation of the life surrounding us. It is *knowledge of the glory of God in the face of* the crucified *Christ;*[3] it is the knowledge in which the revelation of God in Christ is brought to

[1] II Cor. 5 : 21.—[2] Rom. 6 : 8, 11.—[3] II Cor. 4 : 6.

perfection for the single Christian. To the eye of faith Christ is the revelation of God. That is one thing which faith possesses in Christ.

The other one I characterized thus: that Christ shows us in his own person what we, too, are to become like remains. There have been times, in the days of deism and rationalism, when of faith in Christ only this remained, that he is our example. For this very reason the idea that Christ is the Christian's prototype was in disfavor with many Christians during the time following. And it is true that the idea can be interpreted wrongly. For we cannot here on earth think and act and live and die as Christ did. For this he stands too high above us, and his life had a mission with which ours cannot be in the least compared. Nevertheless, the idea that Christ is our example was very real to the first Christians, and even to-day it impresses itself upon every faithful Christian.

The former I shall prove not only by the words of Jesus in the Gospel of John: *I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you*,[1] or by the well-known words with which Paul places the unselfishness of Jesus before

[1] John 13 : 15.

Christians: *Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus*,[1] or by the also well-known passage from I Peter: *Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example that ye should follow his steps*.[2] We must here attend to a train of thought which extends much farther and which is seen most clearly in Paul. We see it in other parts of the New Testament, too,[3] but I shall confine myself to pointing it out in Paul. It is the idea that Jesus and those who believe in him, the Master and his disciples, the Lord and his servants, belong together—an idea which Paul expresses most clearly in his conception of Jesus as the beginner of a new mankind. This idea is found not only in the famous passage of Romans in which Paul compares Christ as the new Adam with the first man,[4] and in the kindred passage in I Corinthians where he places Christ, as the beginner of a spiritual mankind, *i. e.*, a mankind guided by the Spirit of God, by the side of Adam, the beginner of the natural mankind.[5] We find this idea everywhere in the writings of Paul: when he says that we shall *put on*

[1] Phil. 2 : 5.—[2] I Peter 2 : 21.—[3] Comp., *e. g.*, Matt. 10 : 25; John 17 : 10, 18 *f.*, 21–24; Heb. 12 : 2; Rev. 2 : 28; 3 : 4, 12, 21. —[4] Rom. 5 : 12–21.—[5] I Cor. 15 : 45–49.

the new man,[1] or *put on Christ*,[2] or when he calls Christ *the first-born among many brethren*,[3] *the first-fruit of them that slept*,[4] or *the first-born from the dead*.[5] And the apostle connects this opinion about Christ as the beginner of a new mankind closely with the other one, that he is the image of God. *We all*, he says, *with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord are transformed into the same image from glory to glory even as from the Lord the spirit*.[6] And when in the next chapter he says: *It is God that said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*[7]—it is evident that he, when writing this, was thinking of that which we read in the story of the creation: *God said, Let there be light, and there was light*.[8] Here, too, the beginning of a new mankind in Christ is placed beside the first creation. To modern believers this idea is perhaps not so full of life as it was to the apostle Paul. But even in our day every one who begins to believe in Christ experiences this, viz., that an im-

[1] Col. 3 : 10; Eph. 4 : 24.—[2] Gal. 3 : 27.—[3] Rom. 8 : 29.—[4] I Cor. 15 : 20.—[5] Col. 1 : 18.—[6] II Cor. 3 : 18.—[7] II Cor. 4 : 6.—[8] Gen. 1 : 3.

age is put before him of what he is to become. And even to-day it is a very common form of Christian hope: "Christ lives; with him I too shall live." Even to-day we are comforted at the grave-side by the words: *Our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory.*[1]

We have thus proved what I stated, viz., that faith in Jesus contains these two points: that it is Christ in whom God is revealed to us, and that he is the beginner of a new mankind. In what relation does this faith now stand to the contradictory traits which historical science can show in the historical Jesus without being able to unite these traits in one picture? Evidently what the historical science can show harmonizes very well with faith. If Jesus had not been a real man, who lived in this world of ours, he could not have been the beginner of a new mankind nor could he have been our example. And, on the other hand, the circumstance that the self-consciousness of Jesus surpassed purely hu-

[1] Phil. 3 : 20.

man bounds harmonizes perfectly with the fact that he becomes a revelation of God to the believer.

Faith will, therefore, have to oppose the science of history, if the latter, unwilling to recognize that Jesus stands beyond the reach of its standards, thinks that it has to eliminate those traits in the picture of Jesus which surpass the ordinary bounds of human life. Faith will have to claim—and it has a right to do so—that historical science shall acknowledge that it cannot say the last word about Jesus. Faith and the seemingly contradictory traits in the picture of Jesus which historical science can show—those truly human and those surpassing human bounds —these two support one another.

We have thus gained one important result, given one answer to the question, who was Jesus? And this answer runs thus: he was a real man, and yet not a man like all others,—a man in whose case the analogy of all other human experience is of no use, a unique man among all the children of God, (or sons of God as the New Testament says,) the unique one, the only begotten son.

But does this give us a real appreciation of Jesus, an appreciation such as we aim at with regard to other historical personages, an appreciation which enables us to comprehend how Jesus became what he was, an appreciation which makes all the details intelligible as the effects of the inmost kernel, if I may use this expression, of his personality? Such an appreciation is not given with our answer. Can we attain to such an appreciation? Can formulas, can ideas, be found which are able to make the unique historical person of Jesus more intelligible than in the orthodox Christology?

It will be in accordance with the importance which the apostolic testimony about Christ has for us, if we first ask whether the New Testament gives us such formulas or such ideas. But it is easier to put the question than to answer it. For those New Testament writers who seem to have had an explanation which satisfied them of Christ's unique position have not expressly spoken about it anywhere. Even in Paul—with the views of whose faith we are more fully acquainted than with those of any other biblical writer—even in Paul we find only a few hints

as to how he explained to himself the unique position of Jesus. Like John, he assumed that something eternal, divine, appeared in this historical person, and, like John, he unified in his thoughts this eternal something and the historical Christ. In John we see this in the words of Jesus he reports: *O Father, glorify thou me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was;*[1] and Paul, not for the first time in Colossians[2] but even in I Corinthians, says of Jesus Christ: *We have one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things and we by him.*[3] This idea, too, that Christ, or the divine element in him, had already been the organ of the creation of the world, is not peculiar to Paul. We find the same idea in the Gospel of John[4] and in the epistle to the Hebrews.[5] But, in spite of this, we cannot tell how Paul, how John, how the epistle to the Hebrews looked upon the relation of this divine element in Jesus to the one God. People who, without the least scruple, interpret Paul, John, and Hebrews according to the dogmatics of later times will probably not

[1] John 17 : 5.—[2] Col. 1 : 16.—[3] I Cor. 8 : 6.—[4] John 1 : 3.—[5] Heb. 1 : 2.

understand this. But it is none the less undoubtedly true. It is even proved by the great variety of interpretations which the Pauline Christology has found in the theology of to-day. Thus, up to the present day, the view—an erroneous one in my mind—which interprets I Corinthians 15 : 47 *f.* as if Paul thought of Jesus in his pre-existence as a heavenly man, has not yet died out. And even to-day scholars are not agreed whether Paul is speaking of the pre-existent Christ[1] or, as I believe with other critics,[2] of the historical Jesus, when he says of Christ, Philippians 2 : 7: *He emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men.* These uncertainties in the interpretation —not to mention other reasons—are sufficient to make it impossible to call the idea of Christ's pre-existence in the form which it has in Paul, John, and Hebrews, a solution of the problem we are speaking about. In the form which later interpretations gave to this idea it will occupy

[1] This is still the prevailing opinion among modern theologians.

[2] Comp. A. Schlatter, *Die Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, II, Calw, 1910, p. 303 *f.* ("not only the pre-existent Christ"); W. Lütgert, *Die Vollkommnen im Philipperbrief*, Gütersloh, 1909, p. 39 *ff.*; W. Warren on Phil. 2 : 7 (*Journal of Theological Studies*, XII, London, 1911, pp. 461–463).

us later on. The case is somewhat different with another idea which frequently occurs in the New Testament, the idea that God's Spirit lived and worked in Christ. For this idea is not exposed in the same degree to such a variety of possible interpretations. Nevertheless, it will be expedient to treat this idea, too, in a later connection. I therefore refrain from entering more fully on the New Testament views here. In the interpretation given to them by later theologians, we shall meet them again.

I also ignore for the present the older post-biblical time. Does modern theology hold out formulas or ideas which might explain to us the unique character of Jesus?

It can, of course, not be my task to answer this question by investigating the great number of modern Christological constructions. It will be sufficient if I mention a few characteristic types.[1]

Firstly, I shall refer to a theory which for some time people believed would constitute the final solution of the Christological problem. I

[1] Comp. E. Günther, *Die Entwicklung der Lehre von der Person Christi im 19. Jahrhundert*, Tübingen, 1911.

refer to the kenotic theory.[1] This theory enjoyed a great reputation in Germany in the latter half of the past century among those people who wished to remain near to the orthodox traditions; nor has it died out among us, though it has been pushed pretty far back. And in England this theory found supporters at the very time when it began to disappear in Germany.[2] In Sweden, too, it was confidently defended as late as 1903 by Oskar Bensow.[3] In Germany it was especially the Erlangen theologians and their followers that defended this kenotic theory. Following a more insignificant predecessor, Gottfried Thomasius († 1875) was the first to treat it fully, in 1845, and Franz Frank († 1894) still retained it in a careful form. The Greek term *Kenosis*, after which the theory is called, is taken from the passage in Philippians already quoted above, in which Paul says: *Who* (viz., Christ), *being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an*

[1] Comp. my article "Kenosis" in the *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche, 3. Auflage, herausgeg. von A. Hauck*, X, Leipsic, 1901, pp. 246–263.—[2] Comp. W. Sanday, *Christologies, Ancient and Modern*, Oxford, 1910, pp. 74–78.—[3] O. Bensow, *Die Lehre von der Kenose*, Leipsic, 1903.

equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men.[1] The Kenosis is the self-emptying of the divine nature of Christ as found by the kenotic theory in these words of Paul. In order to make a really human life of Jesus conceivable in spite of his divinity, the theory asserts that the eternal Son of God, in the moment of his incarnation, emptied himself more or less of his divinity, and so became the subject of a really human life, while his divine self-consciousness was changed into a human one. In this way people thought they could do justice to both, viz., to the really human life of Jesus and to the superhuman self-consciousness which is revealed by not a few of his words. Jesus could, because the Son of God had really become a man in him, *increase in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man.*[2] He could pray, develop morally, hunger, thirst, and suffer. Only gradually the reminiscence of his eternal glory awoke more and more in his self-consciousness, and, at the exaltation, the glory, which the Son of God had put off at his incarnation, was given back to

[1] Phil. 2 : 6, 7.—[2] Luke 2 : 52.

the God-man. The detailed treatment of these thoughts was given by their various supporters with a varying amount of carefulness or carelessness. Wolfgang Friedrich Gess, of Breslau († 1891), the most reckless advocate of the kenosis theory, went so far as to say that the self-consciousness of the Son of God was extinguished at the moment of the incarnation. Only gradually, he thought, did it emerge again out of the darkness of unconsciousness in which the earthly life of the incarnate Logos, like every human life, began. But even in a more carefully expressed form, indeed, even in the most carefully expressed form, the theory is untenable. I shall not employ my time to show that this is not what Paul meant, nor shall I prove that the theory manœuvres with a conception of the divine Trinity which causes monotheism to perish in tritheism.[1] Here it will suffice to point out that this theory is not suited to effect a satisfactory appreciation of the person of Christ. To plain thinkers the theory may seem intelligible. Is it not possible for a German officer to resign his position, to come over to America, and, if

[1] Comp. *Realencyplopädie usw.*, X, 263, 15 *ff.*

he likes, to live here as a plain workman? But he surely cannot put off his self as he doffed his uniform. It is even more inconceivable that a divine being should have changed into a man. The theologians of the early church would have turned from such an assertion with horror. No church theologian would have dared before the nineteenth century to speak of changes which the eternal Son of God suffered in his essence at the incarnation. Thoughts that remind us of the kenotic theory are found only in a heretical group of the early church, among a few Apollinarists, and, after the Reformation, outside of the school traditions, in Menno Simons and in the lay-theologizing of Zinzendorf. It is mythology, not theology, which is at the root of this theory.

Nor are, secondly, those modern ideas more tenable which likewise decline the old doctrine of the two natures in Christ, but wish to retain, although without a kenotic theory, the idea of the orthodox Christology that the eternal Son of God himself became the personal subject of a human life.[1] The eternal Son of God—so is

[1] Comp. K. Thieme, *Die neuesten Christologien in Verhältnis zum Selbstbewusstsein Jesu* (*Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*), 18, Tübingen, 1908, pp. 401–472.

the opinion, *e. g.*, of Professor Kunze, of Greifswald,[1] and in a closely related form of Professor Schaeder, of Kiel[2]—did not cease to be God. For to be God and to cease to be so is self-contradiction. But as man Christ employed his Godhead (his omnipotence, his omniscience, etc.), only in a human form, *e. g.*, when he performed the miracles of divine omnipotence in the power of his prayer, etc. This theory is also untenable. For, as we have seen, the historical picture of Jesus does not show us a divine self-consciousness of this kind. And to speak of the divine omnipotence, omniscience, etc., acting in human form is an ingenious but illicit play with the attributes of divine majesty. I can understand when people say that from the wonderful help often afforded by Jesus faith can learn that the almighty God can help wherever he wishes, and that in the sharp-sightedness with which Jesus knew what was in man faith can see an il-

[1] J. Kunze, *Die ewige Gottheit Jesu Christi*, Leipsic, 1904 (an enlarged lecture).

[2] E. Schaeder, *Die Christologie der Bekenntnisse und die moderne Theologie* (*Beiträge zur Förderung christlichen Theologie, herausg. von A. Schlatter und W. Lütgert*, IX, 5), Gütersloh, 1905; *Das Evangelium Jesu und das Evangelium von Jesus* (*Beiträge usw.*, X, 6, 1906); *Die Einzigartigkeit Jesu* (in *Jesus Christus für unsere Zeit von Haussleiter, Walther usw.*, Hamburg, 1907).

lustration of the fact that God *understands our thoughts afar off*.[1] But such a practical religious thought is surely quite different from the rash attempt to explain in human words that divine self-consciousness was present in Jesus in human form, that divine consciousness of omnipotence is shown, *e. g.*, by the circumstance that Jesus knew that his Father heard his prayers at all times.[2] The humanity of Christ does not receive full justice from this theory, in spite of all earnest attempts. And, if we are expected to understand the person of Jesus from the point of view of a divine self-consciousness acting in human form, we are placed before a task which surpasses all our human faculties and is, besides, contradictory in itself. These explanations certainly do not furnish a solution of the Jesus-problem which is intelligible to us human beings.

The construction of Reinhold Seeberg, of Berlin,[3] looks more intelligible on first sight.

[1] Psalm 139: 2.—[2] John 11 : 42.

[3] R. Seeberg, *Die Grundwahrheiten der christlichen Religion*, Leipsic, 1902, 4th edition, 1906; *Warum glauben wir an Christus?* (*Hefte für evangelische Weltanschauung usw.*, I, 9), *Gr. Lichterfelde*, 2d ed., 1903; *Die Persönlichkeit Christi der feste Punkt im fliessenden Strom der Gegenwart* (*Neue kirchliche Zeitschrift*, XIV,

Seeberg, too, starts from the doctrine of the Trinity. But he knows better than the supporters of the kenotic theory, and better than Professor Kunze and Professor Schaeder, that the term "person" in the doctrine of the Trinity does not mean, according to the orthodox tradition, that personal independence which we otherwise connect with the term "person"; he knows that it points only to a relation within the Godhead between Father and Son. In Seeberg's opinion, the term is an expression for a particular direction of the divine will-energy which aims at the realization of the church. This divine will-energy—such is the opinion of Seeberg—created the man Jesus as its organ and worked through him. The personality of Jesus is that of his humanity; but God's personal will worked through Jesus, and in such a manner that Jesus in his personal life became fully at one with this personal will of God. I refrain from criticising the ideas on the Trinity and the incarnation which Seeberg proposes in these views—I should more easily praise their correctness than their

Erlangen and Leipsic, 1903, pp. 437–457; separately edited, Berlin); *Wer war Jesus?* (*Abhandlungen und Vorträge*, II, *Zur systematischen Theologie*, Leipsic, 1909, pp. 226–253.)

orthodoxy—I only ask: Has this theory solved the Jesus-problem? has it made the unique character of Jesus intelligible? Too intelligible! I should say. Seeberg is as well acquainted with the inner life of Jesus as if he had been the confidant of his inmost thoughts. And that, I think, condemns this attempt to explain the unique situation of Jesus. For the sources do not give us such accurate information.

Quite differently Schleiermacher[1] and Albrecht Ritschl[2] tried to make the unique position of Jesus intelligible by statements which confine themselves to his human life. According to Schleiermacher, the unique character of Jesus consisted in the singular strength of his consciousness of God; according to Ritschl, it consisted in the facts that Jesus did not allow anything to interrupt his communion with God, and that he had the unique mission to establish the kingdom of God on earth. I do not say that these thoughts leave no room for the superhuman self-consciousness of Jesus. Neither Schleier-

[1] F. Schleiermacher († 1834), *Der christliche Glaube nach den Grundsätzen der evangelischen Kirche*, II, Berlin, 1822.

[2] A. Ritschl († 1889), *Die christliche Lehre von der Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, III, Bonn, 1874, 3d edition, 1888.

macher or Ritschl denied this characteristic of Jesus' self-consciousness. But for this very reason these formulas are no explanation, but only a description of the unique character of Jesus. I do not wish to blame them for this. You will see that I myself, like many other theologians who were educated in Ritschl's school, know no other way out of the difficulties. But, if we confine ourselves to a description, this description must be complete. And I do not believe that this is the case with Schleiermacher and Ritschl. The revelation of God in Christ is for Schleiermacher and Ritschl an indirect one, so to speak: we are to recognize God's character so far as it is reflected in Christ's consciousness of and confidence in God. But the New Testament assertions of faith and our own experience point, to my mind, toward a more direct form of the revelation of God in Christ. Christ becomes the revealer of God to us not only, and not at first, indirectly, through his faith in God, but also directly, through his words and deeds that speak to us.

This is made more clear in the views of Seeberg mentioned before. But, as I said, See-

berg appears too rich in knowledge of the inner life of Christ. But I know a living divine who shows more reserve, although he occupies a similar position to Seeberg, and either has greatly influenced Seeberg or is united with him in the influence which Isaak August Dorner († 1884) exerted on both. I refer to the highly esteemed oldest professor of our theological faculty of Halle, Martin Kaehler (born 1835).[1] Kaehler, like the early Christian tradition, finds the explanation of the unique character of the man Jesus in his substantial connection with God. But he does not explain the union of the divine and human life in Jesus as the combination of two independent beings, but as reciprocal interaction between two personal movements, a begetting action on the side of the eternal Godhead and a receiving activity on the side of the humanity. In a progressive moral development the human soul of Jesus had appropriated the contents of the life of the Godhead, and the God-man manifested and manifests his increasing unity with God in the prophetic, priestly, and

[1] M. Kaehler, *Die Wissenschaft der christlichen Lehre*, Leipsic, 1883, 3d edition, 1905. Since this lecture was given Professor Kaehler has died, September 7, 1912.

kingly influence which he exerted and exerts on the human race. Kaehler shows a close connection with the church tradition in his views on the Trinity. But he remains here in strictly Augustinian paths; the triune God is the one God; all semblance of tritheism is absent. And although the influence exerted by God on the humanity of Jesus is ascribed especially to the second hypostasis of the Godhead, that is, as Kaehler says, to God as far as he is restricting himself in his self-revelation, nevertheless, also in this influence exerted on the manhood of Jesus, God is the indivisible one God, and the second hypostasis remains unlimited in its relation to the world as creator, in spite of the incarnation. And, although Kaehler considers the doctrine of the Trinity indispensable to theology, he admits that it is of but relative value for acquiring salvation.

There is a closer connection between these views and tradition than I can approve. For, however reserved Kaehler may be, still, when he derives an essential Trinity from the economic Trinity, *i. e.*, from the revelation of God in the *economy*, that is, in the history of salvation, he

asserts more than I venture to support. But, in spite of this, I considered it expedient to draw your attention to his views, because from them we can see how far even conservative theology meets the views which I find myself finally brought to. I lay stress, therefore, on three points which seem to me important in Kaehler's statements.

(1) The idea of the incarnation is here, in accordance with the tradition of the early church, brought nearer to that of inspiration, permanent inspiration. The incarnation, conceived in this manner, does not include a change in God, but is the indwelling of God in the man Jesus, and this indwelling is proportionate to the religious and moral development of Jesus.

(2) The divine character of Jesus is not proved by analyzing his person, not by physiological or psychological investigations, but by pointing to the prophetic, priestly, and kingly influence he exerts upon men.

(3) Hence, no attempt is made to ascertain what it was that constituted the personality in the historical Jesus. Kaehler, it is true, really seems to regard the eternal Son of God

as having been the personal subject of the historical Jesus, but nevertheless he seems to assume that Jesus as a real man possessed also a human self-consciousness. It is not want of clearness, as I think, but only reserve, that makes Kaehler abandon the attempt to understand how the human self-consciousness of Jesus was modified by the indwelling of God in him.[1]

If I were forced to give a speculative Christology, no one would be more welcome to me than that of Kaehler. But I think we have to become even more independent of the later traditions than Kaehler has done.

In trying to prove this, I shall at first go a little out of my way. The oldest doctrine of the Trinity which we know, and which we can trace back as far as the former half of the second century, is only an economic one.[2] The one God is

[1] This is not meant as if I would deny every want of "clearness" in Kaehler's statements. What he says, *e. g.*, on the enhypostasia (l. c. §392 *b*, p. 343; comp. §381, p. 335 *f*), is, to my mind, neither intelligible nor tenable (comp. what is said above, p. 128, *e. g.*, about the language of Jesus).

[2] For the following statements comp. my *Dogmengeschichte*, 4th edition, 1906, pp. 103 *f.*, 140 *ff.*, 245 *ff.*; my paper, *Die Trinitätslehre Marcells v. Ancyra und ihr Verhältnis zur ältern Tradition, Sitzungsberichte der Berliner Akademie*, 1902, pp. 764–781); and the notes in my edition of the so-called *Symbolum Sardicense* (*Das Glaubensbekenntnis der Homousianer von Sardika, Abhandlungen der Berliner Akademie*, 1909, pp. 1–39).

threefold in his revelation in history. His Spirit or his Logos, who was his energetic power also at the creation, lived in the man Jesus in such a manner that Jesus was both the unique Son of God who reveals the Father and the beginner of a new spiritual mankind, the first-born among many brethren. Exalted to the right hand of God, to a position of royal sway, he left his Spirit, the Spirit of God, in the community. The Spirit leads the way to the Son, and through him to the Father; and, when all the redeemed have been made perfect, the Spirit of God will fill all children of God, as it first filled the first-born among many brethren. The special sovereignty of the latter will then cease, as Paul says: *Then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all.*[1]

It is of no direct importance for the question which occupies us to penetrate deeper into these views on the Trinity. For us the three following thoughts, held out by these views, are the most valuable: first, that the historical person of Christ is looked upon as a human personality; secondly, that this personality, through an in-

[1] I Cor. 15 : 28.

dwelling of God or his Spirit, which was unique both before and after, up to the end of all time, became the Son of God who reveals the Father and became also the beginner of a new mankind; and, thirdly, that in the future state of perfection a similar indwelling of God has to be realized, though in a copied and therefore secondary form, in all people whom Christ has redeemed.

These thoughts have their root in the New Testament. In support of this I refer to what I said in the fifth lecture.[1] I add only that here, in the idea of the indwelling of God's Spirit in Jesus, we meet with the oldest formula which tries to explain the unique character of Jesus, the formula which lies at the root of the story that Jesus was born out of the Spirit of God,[2] at the root of the story of his baptism,[3] at the root of the words on the cross, *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit*,[4] and of many other New Testament statements—the formula which Paul employs in a prominent passage of Romans, where he says of Christ: *Who was born of the*

[1] Above, p. 182 *ff.*—[2] Matt. 1 : 20; Luke 1 : 35.—[3] Mark 1 : 10*f.*, and parallels.—[4] Luke 23 : 46.

seed of David according to the flesh . . ., declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead.[1]

Is this the formula which solves the Christological problem; the formula which combines into a harmonious whole the convictions of faith about Christ and those facts which historical research, remaining in its bounds, has to recognize? We might feel inclined to answer the question in the affirmative, because the formula does justice to both, to the real human life of Jesus and to his superhuman self-consciousness on the one hand, on the other hand to the belief that he is the perfect revelation of God and at the same time the beginner of a new mankind. And there are systematic theologians—of German ones I mention only Professor Wendt, of Jena[2]—who are satisfied with this formula. To every layman to whom this formula seems intelligible, we ought therefore to say: Be content with it. The conviction that God dwelt so perfectly in Jesus through his Spirit, as had never been the case before and never will be till the end of all time,

[1] Rom. 1 : 3 *f.*—[2] H. H. Wendt, *System der christlichen Lehre*, Göttingen, 1906–07.

does justice to what we know historically about Jesus, and may, at the same time, be regarded as satisfactorily expressing the unique position of Jesus which is a certainty to faith. It also justifies our finding God in Christ when we pray to him.

But do we understand what the Spirit of God is? God himself is spirit.[1] The activity of his Spirit is his activity. If we distinguish between God and his Spirit, we only do so, as Wendt also says, in order to point out that God's infinite essence is not exhausted in any one of his activities.

Thus, we are again placed before a mystery when we speak of the indwelling of God's Spirit in Jesus. And we could also argue against the formula, that it can easily be softened down; in which case the unique character of Jesus would no longer be expressed by this formula as clearly as faith has a right to wish.

My last refuge, therefore, is the term which Paul strongly emphasizes in the epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians, *the mystery of Christ*.[2]

[1] John 4 : 24.—[2] Col. 4 : 3 (comp. 1 : 26, 27; 2 : 2); Eph. 3 : 4, 9 (comp. 1 : 9 *f.*; 6 : 19).

And what is this mystery? *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself*,[1] that is the mystery. It would be attempting impossible things if we tried to understand the historical person of Christ. The saying of Goethe: *Man, thou art as the Spirit whom thou conceivest*,[2] is very apt in this connection. We must learn to content ourselves with that which historical science and the experiences of our faith teach us. Both, as we have already seen, harmonize very well with each other. The "historical" Jesus is not the Jesus whom historical science paints when it eliminates all those observations which do not fit into the frame of a purely human life. Historical science is not able to do full justice to Jesus. Jesus *is set for the falling and rising up of many*[3]—in our world, too. In respect of Christ, only a position either of belief or of disbelief is possible. And no science can prevent us from saying: The historical Jesus is the same as the Christ of faith, *i. e.*, the Christ who was a man, but also the beginner of a new mankind,

[1] II Cor. 5 : 19.—[2] The first part of Goethe's *Faust*. From the German by John Anster, London, 1887 (Henry Irving edition), p. 38.—[3] Luke 2 : 34.

and the Christ in whose face we behold the glory of God, our Saviour and our Lord.

But if we ask: How could Jesus be this? we must answer, we can never penetrate so deep as to learn how God made him what he was. *No one knows the Son save the Father,*[1] says Jesus in Matthew, and in another passage we read: *The stone which the builders rejected, the same was made the head of the corner. This was from the Lord, and it is marvellous in our eyes.*[2] And Paul says after a similar metaphor, and with these words I close: *He that believeth on him shall not be put to shame.*[3]

[1] Matt. 11 : 27.—[2] Matt. 21 : 42.—[3] Rom. 9 : 33.

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